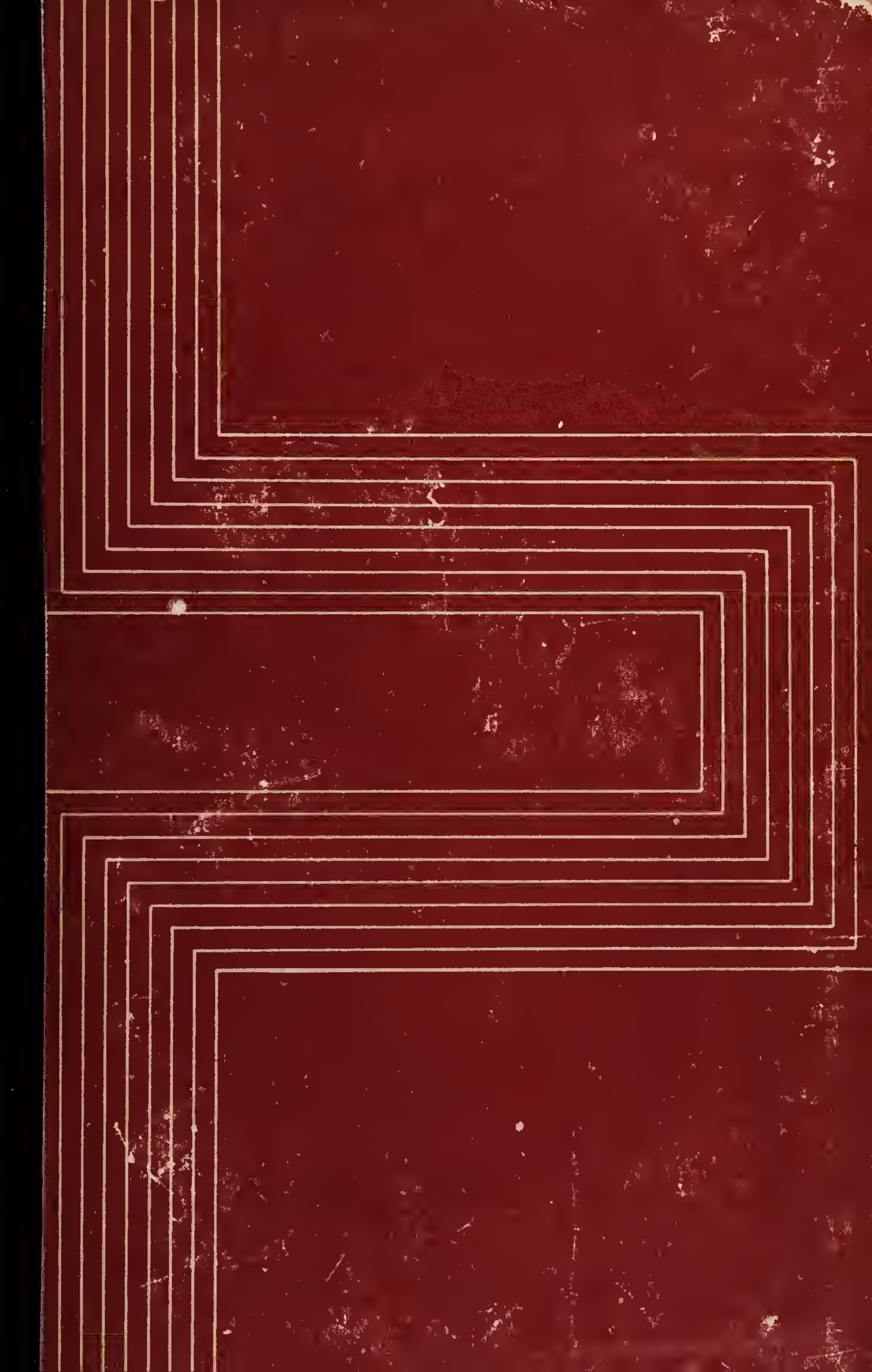
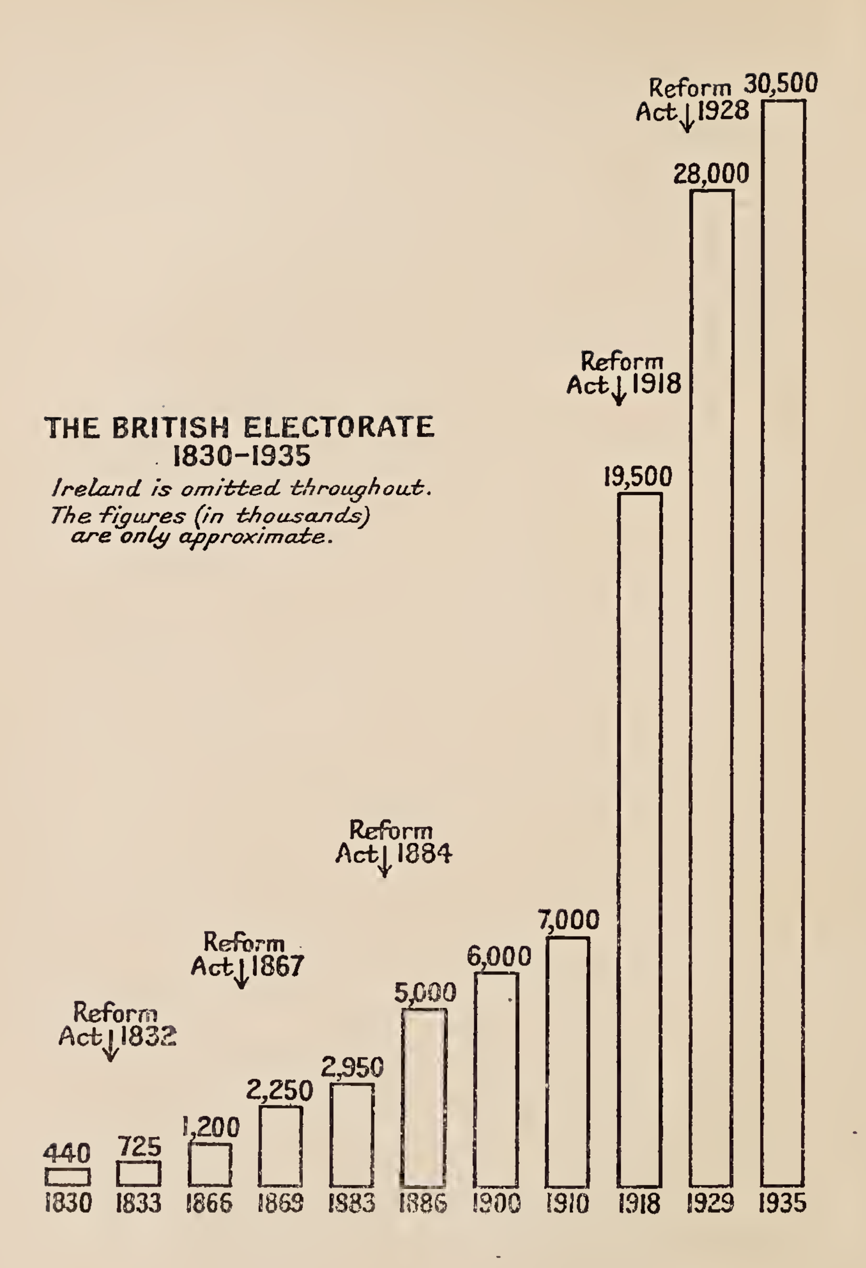


BRITISH WORKING CLASS POLITICS

1832–1914

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[Frontispiece

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BRITISH WORKING CLASS POLITICS

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LONDON
THE LABOUR BOOK SERVICE
68–74 CARTER LANE, E.C.4

First published 1941

Printed in Great Britain by Butler & Tanner Ltd., Frome and London

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LABOUR AND POLITICS

1832–1914

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CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND

Five Reform Acts—The Growth of the Electorate—Class-Structure and Economic Development

In the course of a century, between 1832 and 1928, five Reform Acts entirely transformed the basis of political representation in Great Britain. Up to 1832 the vote was, at any rate in the town constituencies, a privilege rather than a right. The urban franchise had no uniform basis : in a few towns the vote was widely distributed, to all householders paying ' scot and lot '—roughly the equivalent of local rates—whereas in the great majority of towns the number of voters was small. Often the right was confined to the members of the municipal corporation—a body renewing itself by co-option, and excluding Dissenters. In many places there was a voting body of non-resident ' freemen ', created by the corporation often for the purpose of ensuring a safe majority for candidates of the right colour. In not a few ' towns ' which returned members to Parliament, the ' town ' itself was a fiction, having fallen entirely into decay ; so that the vote was attached to a few cottages, or even to a single cottage kept in existence solely for the purpose of maintaining the parliamentary privilege. Of this class were many of the ' rotten boroughs ', completely owned by a single great landlord or by a ' boroughmonger ' who had bought up the place in order to be able to sell a seat in Parliament to the highest bidder. Readers of Thomas Love Peacock's novels will remember how, in *Melincourt*, he describes the borough of Onevote, situated close to the populous city of Novote, and how its solitary elector, Mr. Christopher Corporate, performed the ceremony of electing to the House of Commons two members—one of whom, in Peacock's story,

was a tame orang-outang for whom his owner had also been at the expense of purchasing a baronetcy.

In the county divisions, the franchise was at any rate more uniform. But, being based exclusively on the ownership of landed property, it excluded the large and rapidly growing number of farmers who rented, instead of owning, the land which they tilled ; and it also lent itself to abuse through the creation of fictitious ownerships for the purpose of conferring the vote. Big landowners, shortly before an election, would fictitiously convey small parcels of land to persons who could be relied on to vote as they were required ; and in any case the large landowners exercised a very powerful influence over the smaller proprietors. Where opposition of any serious kind was offered to the large owners, it could come only from the lesser freeholders who had land enough to give them votes ; and their views were commonly on most subjects fully as reactionary as those of the big proprietors. They had indeed a prejudice against high government expenditure and against the grant of pensions and sinecures at the taxpayers' expense. But on other matters they had no programme ; and when the County Reform movement led by Sir George Savile and Christopher Wyvill had been bought off by the Economical Reform Act of 1782, they gave little further trouble.

Thus, up to 1832 there was a highly exclusive franchise in the counties, and one yet more exclusive in the great majority of the boroughs which possessed parliamentary rights. Moreover, these boroughs did not include most of the new towns which had grown rapidly in population during the Industrial Revolution. Such towns as Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds and Sheffield had no parliamentary representation at all.

It has been calculated that in 1831, on the eve of the first Reform Act, there were in England and Wales altogether about 435,000 voters, out of a population of nearly fourteen millions. Not quite one person out of every thirty had the right to vote. In 1832, after the Act, there were in England and Wales nearly 653,000 voters—an increase of almost 50 per cent. Even so, not so much as one person out of every twenty possessed the franchise. But the redistribution of seats in 1832 was even more important than the increase in the number of

voters. Great towns such as those mentioned above were now represented in Parliament, and there was a great sweeping away of ‘ rotten boroughs ’, including both those which had been in the pockets of single landowners or borough speculators and those in which the municipal corporation, with or without a body of appointed ‘ freemen ’, had monopolized the franchise. After 1832 most elections could have some real meaning, though the basis of representation remained very narrow, and the House of Commons was chosen, not by the people, but by the upper and middle classes alone.

By the year 1866 the number of electors in England and Wales had grown to more than a million, partly through the increase of population and partly through migration into the towns. There had been no further extension of the franchise, but in practice there had been a tendency towards widening it, owing to the growth in the relative numbers of the middle classes.

The second Reform Act, passed in 1867, nearly doubled the electorate—increasing it in England and Wales from 1,057,000 in 1866 to 1,995,000 in 1868. In the towns the number of voters was considerably more than doubled by this Act, which, passed by a Conservative Government, aimed at leaving untouched the ascendancy of the landowners in the county constituencies. At the General Election of 1868, as a result of the extension of the urban franchise, one in every eleven, out of a total population of about twenty-two millions, had the right to vote.

The third Reform Act was passed in 1884, accompanied by an important Redistribution Act the following year. By 1883 the growth of wealth and urban populations had raised the total electorate of England and Wales to 2,618,000. The Act of 1884 enlarged it by two-thirds—to a total of 4,381,000. Whereas the second Reform Act had dealt with the urban areas and had conferred the vote on a considerable proportion of the workers in the towns, the third Reform Act, passed by the Liberals and designed to break the Tory monopoly in the countryside, was based on the assimilation of the county to the urban franchise, and produced its increase mainly in the county constituencies. The county electorate rose from under one

million to more than two and a half millions. Roughly one out of every six persons had now the right to vote.

Thereafter, the basis of representation remained unchanged for more than a third of a century. The agitation for women's suffrage, very active during the years before the Great War, did not succeed until 1918, and one of its effects was to prevent a clearing up of anomalies in the case of men. In England and Wales, the Representation of the People Act, passed in 1918, increased the number of electors to well over seventeen millions. Women were given the vote only at 30 years of age, as against 21 for men ; but the Act added nearly seven million women in England and Wales to the roll of electors. In 1918 not far short of half the total population had the right to vote.

Finally, in 1928 women were given the parliamentary vote on the same terms as men. This fifth Reform Act raised the total electorate of England and Wales to twenty-five millions, out of a population of thirty-nine millions ; and by 1935, when the last General Election up to the writing of this book was held, the electors of England and Wales numbered nearly twenty-eight millions, and the total population about forty-one millions. More than two-thirds of the people could vote, including very nearly all the adults. But an element of plural voting still survived, in the possibility of casting two votes, one in respect of residence and a second in respect of business premises or University qualification.

The figures in the preceding paragraphs are all for England and Wales only, because for some of the earlier dates there is difficulty in giving figures for Scotland. But, broadly, the story for Scotland is the same, except that the Scottish franchise was even narrower than the English before 1832. In 1937 the total electorate of Great Britain numbered 31,116,000, out of a population of forty-six millions.

This brief account of the growth of the British electorate is a necessary prelude to the account to be given in this book of the successive efforts of the ' lower orders ' to achieve representation in Parliament. Radicalism of various sorts was possible, but plainly no such thing as a Labour Party was so, until the franchise had been extended to a substantial part of the working class. We shall see in this book how, after the Chartists

had unavoidably failed to create anything in the nature of a working-class political party, the Reform Act of 1867, which enfranchised a large section of the urban workers, was promptly followed, not indeed by the creation of a Labour Party, but by the election of the first workmen M.P.s. We shall see how the Act of 1884 led directly to a new movement for Labour representation—or rather to several movements: to a revival of the attempts to promote working-class representation under the aegis of the Liberal Party, and also to the development of local organizations aiming at Labour independence, out of which the Independent Labour Party arose in 1893, and the Labour Representation Committee, forerunner of the Labour Party, in 1900.

We shall not—for this book stops at 1914—have the opportunity of tracing out the consequences of the two later Reform Acts of 1918 and 1928—each followed within a very few years by a Labour Government; but in the earlier periods the close relationship between the successive extensions of the franchise and the movements for Labour representation will have been made plain enough. Each Reform Act created, or helped to practical manifestation, an impulse which subsequently lost its force. The Radicalism of 1832 gave birth to the political efforts of the Chartists, which died away after 1848. The Reform Act of 1867 carried the first workmen into Parliament; but the Labour Representation League of 1869 had lost its impetus by 1880; and the further Act of 1884 was needed to give the movement renewed life. Thereafter, growth was more continuous, despite the fact that no further Reform Act reached the statute book until 1918; but the Act of that year was the indispensable prelude to the Labour Government of 1924.

This is not to say that the growth of the parliamentary Labour movement can be interpreted wholly, or even mainly, in electoral terms. The same forces were at work, both in the successive extensions of the franchise and in the struggles of the workers to secure means of political expression. These forces were basically economic; they arose out of the changing forms of industrial life, and the changing class-structure in which the successive phases of economic organization worked

themselves out. After 1832 the enfranchised middle classes divided into groups which coalesced with the older aristocracy for the defence of the *status quo*, and groups which wanted the support of the upper strata of the workers for completing their victory over aristocratic and ecclesiastical privilege. John Bright and his friends wanted the respectable artisans to aid them in defeating the protectionism and exclusiveness of the older vested interests, but were by no means prepared to purchase working-class support at the price of allowing the State to interfere with their freedom to run their factories as they pleased. The more advanced Conservatives, on the other hand, were quite prepared to interfere with the rights of industrial property, as long as they were allowed to retain the Tory hold on the countryside. This explains the curious Tory Reform Act of 1867, which denied in the counties the extension of the franchise it granted to the town-dwellers—a proceeding which inevitably provoked the Liberal retort of 1884.

In interpreting the political history of the century, these two Acts have to be considered together, with the Forster Education Act of 1870 as the link between them. Industrialism more and more needed educated workers—not a small minority of skilled craftsmen, but an educated people, in the limited sense of a people able to read notices, and to do simple sums and exercise the simplest arts of penmanship. But it was difficult to grant education—even elementary education—and to refuse the vote, especially as each party had strong motives for seeking a wider basis of support. It was much better for the Tories to extend the urban franchise themselves than to let the Whigs have the credit of doing so ; and an urban Reform Bill, under Tory auspices, might be made the means of delaying electoral reform in the counties, which the Whigs were otherwise certain to carry through. The Act of 1867 did in fact save the counties from electoral reform for nearly two decades—a valuable respite ; and the Liberal Act of 1884, which at last widened the county electorate, came only when Liberalism had exhausted the new impulses of the years after 1867 and, reft in twain by the Irish question, was unable to profit by the destruction of the landowners' political predominance. County reform was delayed until Liberalism had to face in

Socialism a new challenge to its faith in the virtues of private enterprise. It took another twenty years to reȁdjust itself to the needs of the time ; and the Tories profited meanwhile by its divided counsels. Even thereafter, the great Liberal victory of 1906 was but the prelude to the disintegration of Liberalism, which had no answer to the basic problems of the new industrialism of the twentieth century.

To these problems the Labour movement, though its basic reason for existence was to challenge Liberalism and Conservatism alike, had but dusty answers. For the class-structure was not clear-cut. The Trade Unions, on which the political movement of the workers had to rely for much of its strength, represented largely the skilled craftsmen ; and these were by no means the quite propertyless and rightless proletarians of simplified class-war theory. Their members had their little ‘ stakes in the country ’ : they had something besides their chains to lose, though it were but a little, and there was a gulf between them and the unskilled masses whom the Trade Unions had hardly touched. It needed the industrial uprising of the less skilled workers—symbolized in the Dock Strike of 1889—to call into being a movement for a Labour Party, as distinct from an attempt to get a few working men returned to Parliament as the spokesmen of the organized minority of more highly paid workers. And, even when the less skilled workers had asserted themselves, and the Independent Labour Party had been founded as the political expression of their claims, the older Unionism of the skilled workers remained and effectively prevented the growth of a militant Labour Party standing definitely for Socialism. The Labour Representation Committee of 1900 was a compromise, as well as an alliance, between the Socialists and the Trade Unions of the older type. It has not ceased to be a compromise, even to-day ; nor will it, as long as capitalism continues able to carry on. For it is of the essence of capitalism to divide, as well as to create, the proletariat. The class-structure of advanced capitalist society is not simple, but immensely complex ; and its complexity is reflected in the internal divisions within the fundamental economic classes. Against the background of this complex structure the development of

working-class political movements has to be placed, in order to be correctly understood. The peculiar structure of the Labour Party, as it developed out of Keir Hardie's Independent Labour Party of 1893, was the outcome of the complexity of the stucture of classes under British capitalism. In retrospect, it looks as if the Party had, by sheer force of circumstances, to develop in its own peculiar way. But of that the reader must judge for himself, in the light of the story set out in this book. I ask him only to bear in mind, at every stage, the economic forces to which the political movements arose as a response, and to read this history, not as a thing in itself, but as a monograph dealing with but a single aspect of the social development of British society during the past hundred years.

CHAPTER II

THE BEGINNINGS

From Radical Reform to the Chartists

WHEREVER the workers are voteless, or the right of political agitation is not granted to them, working-class political movements are bound, if they exist at all, to take a revolutionary form. There can be no democratic working-class party, attempting to change the face of society by parliamentary means, unless the workers have the right both to organize politically and to conduct open propaganda campaigns, and also the right to vote. This does not mean that every workman—much less every working woman—must be a voter before a Labour or Socialist Party can be brought into existence. But there must be in the electorate a sufficient proportion of working-class voters to give candidates who offer themselves as the advocates of the claims of Labour a chance of success. It is also indispensable for the development of any real working-class party that there should be no property qualification for candidates or Members of Parliament ; for though a Labour Party can and usually does include men of other classes among its candidates, no party can properly represent working-class claims and interests unless it consists predominantly of actual workers.

For these reasons, it was impossible for a Labour Party to arise in Great Britain until well on in the second half of the nineteenth century. There were, indeed, long before this, candidates who appeared before the electors primarily as the advocates of working-class claims. But these candidates could not be actual working men as long as the property qualification remained in being : nor was there until after the Reform Act of 1867 any substantial working-class element in the British electorate. The Chartist and other Radical

candidates who stood for Parliament before 1867 had to appeal for the votes of the Radical middle classes. The workers could come to the hustings and shout lustily in their support; but only a handful of them anywhere possessed the vote.

I have already sketched out the stages by which the right to vote has been gradually extended to one section after another of the people, until to-day we have in Great Britain what is virtually universal suffrage. There remains indeed the anomaly that certain persons are still able to cast more than one vote—in my own case as a University voter, for example, or in the much more important case in which a man can vote in respect of both a residential and a business qualification. But this anomaly does not alter the fact that nearly every grown-up person can to-day take part in the election of a Member to serve in Parliament. To that very considerable extent, Great Britain is a democracy; and the British workers are in a position, if they so decide, to choose a House of Commons predominantly representing their own class.

Broadly speaking, the first great Reform Act, passed in 1832 after a tremendous struggle with the House of Lords, extended the vote to the middle classes, and redistributed the seats in Parliament so as to destroy the 'rotten boroughs' and give representation to the new or growing towns which had become populous as a result of the Industrial Revolution. Prior to 1832, each English county returned two members, and each Welsh and Scottish county one member, irrespective of size or population—only the West Riding of Yorkshire having, under an Act of 1821, the right to return four Members.[1] These county members were greatly outnumbered by the Members who were supposed to represent the boroughs. But, as we have said, many of the borough Members in fact represented nobody but themselves, or the great landlord to whom the borough, or a large part of it, belonged. Some of the boroughs which sent two Members to Parliament were tiny villages—a few even single cottages. In many such places the few voters were nominees of the great landlord,

[1] This Act transferred to the West Riding the right to elect two members previously returned for the 'rotten borough' of Grampound, which was disfranchised for corruption.

and voted as he told them. In many others, including both large towns and small, the right to vote was confined to the municipal corporation, which was itself recruited only by co-option ; and the burgesses in such places very often put up the seat or seats for sale to the highest bidder—so that many rich men were able to enter Parliament simply by buying a seat either from a great landlord or from a corrupt municipal body. Indeed, it was usually in this way that the few Radicals who found their way into the unreformed Parliament before 1832 were able to secure election.

There were, however, long before 1832, a very few constituencies in which the franchise was on a fairly democratic basis, extending to all house-occupiers who paid ‘ scot and lot ’—roughly equivalent to the direct payment of local rates. These constituencies included Westminster, Preston and Coventry ; and these three places provided an opportunity for fighting elections on democratic lines at a time when in most constituencies no democratic candidate could hope to succeed unless he was in a position to purchase a seat, or could find a Radical landowner ready to ensure his return. Westminster, where Francis Place, the “ Radical tailor of Charing Cross ”, was the leading democratic wire-puller, first returned Sir Francis Burdett in 1807 ; and Burdett held the seat continuously for thirty years, his Radicalism gradually fading into orthodox Whiggery and finally into Toryism after the Reform Act of 1832. Coventry never returned a Radical, though William Cobbett fought there unsuccessfully in 1820. But Preston had the honour in 1830, at a famous by-election, of returning the first M.P. who can be regarded as in any real sense the representative of the working classes. This was Henry Hunt—the famous ‘ Orator ’ Hunt, who sat in Parliament during the struggle over the Reform Act as the sole representative of extreme Radicalism, and the sole advocate of working-class claims. Hunt, however, lost his seat in 1832, when the Reform Act had destroyed the democratic electorate of Preston and the other ‘ scot and lot ’ boroughs, and had assimilated these oases of democracy to the general pattern of middle-class reform.

Henry Hunt was, in fact, the only ‘ lower-class ’ man who

succeeded in finding his way into the unreformed Parliament as the exponent of popular claims. Burdett was a Radical aristocrat—a rich man and a landowner, perfectly at home, despite his Radical opinions, in the rich man's club at Westminster. He was much less an ' outsider ' than the moderate Radicals who were sent to Parliament as representatives of the City of London—then regarded as a stronghold of Radicalism. But the rich London merchants who professed Radical opinions—John Sawbridge, the friend and collaborator of John Wilkes, and after him Matthew Wood, who espoused Queen Caroline's cause—were in their turn much nearer the circle of aristocratic privilege than such men as Henry Hunt, the Radical orator, and William Cobbett, the former farm-boy and sergeant-major, whose *Weekly Political Register* was by far the most powerful force on the side of the workers and agricultural labourers in the years of acute distress and repression which ensued upon the conclusion of the long war with France. Cobbett, indeed, became a Member of Parliament only after the passing of the Reform Act of 1832, when Oldham sent him to the House of Commons as the colleague of John Fielden, the Radical cotton employer. Hunt alone, with the help of the electors of Preston, forced his way into the unreformed Parliament as the spokesman of the ' lower orders '.

The Act of 1832 did nothing to enfranchise the working classes. It even abolished their hold on the two or three constituencies in which they had been previously a power. But it did, by giving votes to the middle classes and separate representation to the growing industrial towns, open the way to a parliamentary Radicalism which went a long way beyond Whiggery. In the main, the effect of the Reform Act was not to put the representatives of the middle classes into Parliament but to compel the upper classes, who continued to occupy most of the seats, to govern the country in accordance with the wishes and interests of the rising capitalist class. But there was in the reformed Parliament a leaven of middle-class Members ; and, while most of them were the representatives of capitalism, intent chiefly on sweeping away aristocratic privileges and obstacles to the freedom of trade, and intensely

hostile to any working-class claims that conflicted with capitalist freedom of enterprise, the Reform struggle did sweep into the new Parliament a little group of Members whose Radicalism was much more fundamental and sincere than that of their colleagues. Cobbett, as we have seen, was elected with John Fielden for Oldham ; and with them were returned enough other real Radicals to muster a score or so in any division in which working-class claims came into open conflict with the desires of the manufacturing and trading interests. Men of this stamp included Thomas Attwood, the leader of the Birmingham Political Union, Joseph Hume, who, as a Member of the unreformed Parliament, had been chiefly responsible for the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1824, George Faithful, Cobbett's friend and lawyer, who was elected for Brighton, George Kinloch, who sat for Dundee, Robert Wallace, the Member for Greenock, and a few others ; and reinforcements arrived when Thomas Slingsby Duncombe was elected for Finsbury at a by-election in 1834, and re-elected in 1835 with Thomas Wakley, the medical reformer and founder of the *Lancet*, as his colleague. But of all these men only Cobbett could be regarded as belonging in any sense to the working class.

Many of these Radicals won their seats as candidates of what was virtually a third party, opposed to the Whigs as much as to the Tories. Some of them actually went to the poll in three-cornered contests, and beat the official candidates of both the established parties, while in other cases the Whigs did not feel strong enough to put up candidates against the Radicals in certain of the industrial towns. But the ' third party ' of ' Radicals ' or ' Liberals ', as they were almost indiscriminately called, was itself a very heterogeneous body. There were, in fact, two quite distinct groups united only in their hostility to the Whigs and Tories and in their desire to carry further the democratic victory of 1832. The larger fraction of the ' Liberals ' stood primarily for Free Trade and the removal of aristocratic privilege. It wanted a further extension of the suffrage in order to strengthen the hands of the middle classes against the landowners and fundholders, Whig and Tory alike, whose interests were still very powerful in

Parliament even after the Reform Act. It was on the democratic side against aristocratic claims ; but it was strongly opposed to Trade Unionism, factory legislation, and to every kind of State intervention in the economic field. Only the smaller fraction of the ' Radicals ' voted for such measures as Lord Ashley's Factory Bill of 1833, as well as for the abolition of sinecures, the taxation of landed property and the institution of vote by ballot. This Radical group made a good showing in the lobbies only when, as sometimes happened, it received the support of the majority of Daniel O'Connell's Irish followers—a support which the Radicals reciprocated by voting steadily against the Government's measures of coercion in Ireland.

The Act of 1832, revolutionary as it seemed at the time, had left the basis of the electorate still very narrow. At the last General Election before the Reform, the total number of persons entitled to vote was about 435,000 in England and Wales, and in Scotland only a few thousands. The 1832 Act raised the former figure to 653,000, and the latter to 73,000—a total, excluding Ireland, of 726,000. Thereafter no change was made in the basis of representation until 1867 ; but the growth and movement of population and the increase in wealth raised the total British electorate to about 1,200,000 in 1866, the rate of growth being much more rapid in the towns than in the country districts.

Thus, in England and Wales, on the eve of the Reform Act of 1832, out of a population of nearly fourteen millions, not quite one person in every thirty had the right to vote. After 1832 the proportion was still under one in every twenty. But the redistribution of seats was even more important than the increase in the number of voters ; for great towns such as Birmingham and Manchester got representation for the first time, and over the greater part of the country the urban vote acquired a real meaning.

These were the political conditions under which the Chartist movement developed within a few years of the great middle-class victory of 1832. The workers, who had fought side by side with the middle classes in the Reform struggle, and had found themselves left voteless at its conclusion, reacted first of

all by attempting to improve their position by mass industrial action. Between 1832 and 1834 they created, under the leadership of John Doherty in Lancashire and the East Midlands, Simeon Pollard in Yorkshire, James Morrison in Birmingham, and Robert Owen mainly in the South of England, great ‘ General Unions ’ which, largely under the inspiration of Owen’s ideas of Co-operative Socialism, attempted to win a universal eight hours day, and even to supersede capitalism altogether by creating their own agencies for co-operative production and exchange. But by the end of 1834 this great Trade Union movement had been smashed to pieces by the combined onslaught of the Whig Government and of the employers. In Yorkshire, Lancashire, the Midlands, and Scotland there were extensive lock-outs, the employers dismissing every workman who would not sign a paper renouncing membership of “ the Trades Union ”. The Government not only encouraged this policy, but also gave its support to the savage sentence passed by Judge Williams on the six Dorsetshire labourers—known to history as the ‘ Tolpuddle Martyrs ’—for the crime of administering unlawful oaths—in other words, making use of a harmless ceremony of initiation at the enrolment of members into their Trade Union. Under these shattering blows the great Unions were battered easily to pieces ; for they had grown too rapidly to possess much solid strength. The working-class hatred of Whigs and manufacturers was powerfully reinforced by the events of 1834.

Thus beaten decisively in the industrial field, the working classes turned back to politics. William Lovett, Henry Hetherington, and a body of London workmen, mostly skilled artisans, founded the London Working Men’s Association in 1836, and attempted to secure the collaboration of the handful of Radical M.P.s in drafting a new programme of Radical Reform. Out of these labours emerged the People’s Charter, with its famous six points : Manhood Suffrage, the Ballot, Annual Parliaments, Equal Electoral Districts, Payment of Members, and No Property Qualification for sitting in Parliament. In Birmingham Thomas Attwood revived the Political Union which had played a leading part in the struggle of

1830–32 ; and in Newcastle-on-Tyne his brother Charles helped to create a similar Union. Under various names, associations for Radical Reform sprang again into life and began to work in unison for the enactment of the People's Charter.

At the outset, this movement for the Charter was mainly among the skilled artisans, reinforced by many small tradesmen, master craftsmen, and members of the less wealthy or gentlemanly professions. But in 1837 there swept over the industrial districts a deep depression of trade which flung many thousands of miners and factory operatives out of work, and reduced the handloom weavers of the North and the stockingers and lace-makers of the Midlands to the direst poverty. This slump came just as the Poor Law Commissioners—the execrated ' Three Bashaws of Somerset House ' —were busily enforcing in the industrial districts the new Poor Law Act of 1834, under which all relief outside the workhouse —the hated ' Bastille '—was to be denied to able-bodied persons, and the lot of the pauper on relief was to be made always, if possible, ' less eligible ' than that of the worst-off labourer in ordinary employment. Under the conditions of 1837, the enforcement of these principles meant sheer destitution for a large section of the working classes ; and the industrial districts flared into desperate revolt. Strikes were out of the question in view of the state of trade, and Unions had been broken in pieces by the repression of 1834. The starving workers could only protest, demonstrate in their thousands, enforce by the fear of riot some mitigation of the severity of the new law.

These conditions turned the Chartist movement into a great mass agitation supported by the main body of the workers throughout the industrial districts. It seemed hopeless to ask for redress from a Parliament which had just enacted the hated Poor Law and rejected the workers' demand for a Ten Hours Act, or from a Government which had endorsed the smashing of the Trade Unions and the transportation of the Tolpuddle Martyrs. The Chartist leaders, preaching the necessity for a drastic reform of Parliament, to be enforced like the Reform of 1832 by the mass pressure of the people,

found themselves suddenly at the head of a vast mass-movement of revolt against intolerable conditions.

This movement was naturally strongest in the factory and mining districts, which felt the depression much more than London or the Southern and Western Counties. Feargus O'Connor, who had sat in Parliament for an Irish seat as a follower of O'Connell from 1832 to 1835, but had been unseated after a quarrel with his leader, became the head and forefront of the revolt in the North, powerfully aided by the Methodist preacher, Joseph Rayner Stephens, and the Tory land-agent, Richard Oastler, who had gained the name of "the Factory Child's Friend" by his efforts for the Ten Hours Bill. Henry Vincent, a compositor, noted for his powers of oratory, roused Bristol and the West; John Frost, the Newport draper and magistrate, stirred the colliers of South Wales; Augustus Harding Beaumont and James Watson were active in the North-East; and every industrial town in Scotland flared up under its own leaders.

It would be much beyond the scope of this book to record the history of Chartism, from its beginnings in London as a joint effort of the London artisans and the Radical M.P.s to devise a new political programme, through its successive struggles with the Poor Law Commissioners and the middle-class Liberals of the Anti-Corn Law League, its attempt to retrieve its fortunes by O'Connor's Land Scheme in the middle 'forties and its failure to rouse the workers of Great Britain in the "Year of Revolutions", 1848, down to its gradual decline and disappearance in the course of the 'fifties. I am here concerned with Chartism in only one of its aspects—the attempts by Chartists to make use of the parliamentary method by putting up candidates of their own.

It was never possible for the Chartists to make extensive use of this method, or to employ it with any hope of considerable success. The vast majority of their supporters were voteless; and a Chartist candidate had accordingly to gather such votes as he could from Radical members of the middle classes. Moreover, most of the Chartist leaders would have been prevented from sitting in Parliament by the lack of the

requisite property qualification, even if there had been any prospect of their election. Throughout the life of the movement only one person, Feargus O'Connor, secured election to Parliament as a Chartist. Thomas Attwood, Duncombe, Wakley, Fielden, and the rest of the little band of Radicals who supported the Charter in the House of Commons had won their seats before Chartism arose ; and none of them, not even Attwood, ever presented himself to the electors as a Chartist candidate.

Nevertheless, the Chartists did fight quite a number of parliamentary elections ; and in many more instances Chartist candidates presented themselves at the hustings and addressed the electors, without going actually to the poll. In 1837, when the movement was at its very beginning, J. R. Stephens fought Ashton-under-Lyne, A. H. Beaumont Newcastle-on-Tyne, John Bell Coventry, John Morgan Cobbett (son of William) Chichester, and Richard Oastler Huddersfield. At this stage, Chartism was not clearly enough defined for Chartist candidates to be labelled with certainty ; but by 1841, the date of the next General Election, the movement had become organized on a national basis in the National Charter Association. That year, Thomas Lowery fought at Aberdeen, Henry Vincent at Banbury, Peter Murray McDouall at Northampton, Joseph Sturge at Nottingham, James Thomason at Paisley, and Dr. James Bedford at Reigate ; and in addition there were the ' hustings ' candidatures of James Bronterre O'Brien for Newcastle, George Julian Harney and Lawrence Pitkeithly for the West Riding of Yorkshire, J. B. Hanson for Carlisle, John Leach and J. Williams for Leeds, John Mason for Tynemouth, and a number of others. A number of these were actual working men, though naturally it was mainly the middle-class Chartists who actually went to the poll. Vincent was a compositor, Hanson a handloom weaver, Mason a shoemaker, and Leach, I think, a weaver.

Between 1841 and the next General Election the Chartists fought a number of by-elections. In 1842 Vincent fought at Ipswich and Sturge at Nottingham ; in 1844 Vincent again at Kilmarnock, and Sturge this time at Birmingham, his

home town. In 1845 Edward Miall, the editor of the *Nonconformist,* fought at Southwark, not as a Chartist, but on the nearly identical programme of Sturge's Complete Suffrage Union.

In 1847 the General Election produced a further crop of Chartist candidates. Vincent tried again at Ipswich, and Sturge this time at Leeds. Ernest Jones appeared as candidate for Halifax; W. P. Roberts, known as the 'Miners' Attorney' for his sterling work for the National Miners' Association, fought at Blackburn; Thomas McGrath contested Derby, Thomas Clark Sheffield, John West Stockport, George Julian Harney Tiverton, and Dr. John Epps, of the Fraternal Democrats, Northampton. Finally, at this election Feargus O'Connor was returned for Nottingham.

After 1848, as the movement itself declined, the number of Chartist candidates fell off. Henry Vincent fought a York by-election in 1848, and Dr. McDouall another at Carlisle. But at the General Election of 1852 the Chartists were a sadly reduced band. O'Connor had become insane; and the barrister, Charles Sturgeon, who stood for his seat at Nottingham, was heavily beaten. On this occasion Ernest Jones fought at Halifax. Vincent again tried vainly at York, and J. S. Lockhart fought at Northampton, while James Watson, the well-known Radical bookseller, and George Applegate, a local coal-whipper, appeared on the hustings at Tynemouth, but did not go to the poll. Much the most interesting candidature of 1852 was that of William Newton, a leading figure in the London Labour movement and in the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, then engaged in its desperate struggle with the engineering employers for its right to exist. Newton stood as a moderate Chartist for Tower Hamlets, a constituency with a long tradition of unsuccessful Radical contests against the sitting Whig Members.

This was the last occasion on which the Chartists were able to make anything of a muster at a General Election. By 1857 they were reduced to two—Ernest Jones at Nottingham and C. F. F. Wordsworth at Paisley. Probably the last Chartist candidature was that of Ernest Jones, when he again contested Nottingham in 1859, unless the honour be accorded

to F. R. Lees, who stood as an extreme Radical for Ripon in 1860.

Despite the narrowness of the franchise, some of the Chartist candidates polled a very respectable vote. Henry Vincent, for example, got 475 votes at Ipswich in 1842 against the top candidate's 651. In the same year Joseph Sturge, standing on the platform of the Complete Suffrage Union, was only narrowly beaten in a by-election at Nottingham, by 1,885 to 1,801. In 1847, when O'Connor was elected for Nottingham, Sturge again did well at Leeds, with 1,980 votes against the top candidate's 2,526, and at Ipswich Vincent polled 546 against 829. Vincent at York in the following year polled 860 against 1,505, and in 1852 at the same place, 886 against 1,871. In the big Tower Hamlets constituency, Newton received 1,095 votes against his leading opponent's 7,728. On the other hand, some of the Chartist candidates fared much worse than this. J. R. Stephens at Ashton-under-Lyne in 1837 polled only 19 against 237, and both Thomason at Paisley in 1841 and Harney at Tiverton in 1847, failed to secure even a single vote, those cast for them being disallowed by the Returning Officer. The decline in the Chartist fortunes can be seen in the record of the successive Nottingham contests. Sturge nearly won a seat there in 1842 ; O'Connor, with 1,257 votes, became the junior Member in 1847 (his senior colleague polling 1,683) ; Sturgeon in 1852 polled 512 against the leader's 1,960 ; Ernest Jones in 1857 secured 614 against 2,393 ; and finally Jones in 1859 could poll only 151 votes against 2,456.

By that time the Chartist movement was practically dead. It had been, almost from the outset, a hunger movement, the outcome of intolerable and widespread distress. As conditions improved with the rapid growth of British world trade, the repressiveness both of the Government and of the employers was relaxed. Wages rose ; hours of labour were reduced after the passing of the Ten Hours Act in 1847 ; and unemployment became less prevalent. The Anti-Corn Law League had drawn away from the Chartists a large part of their middle-class support and not a few of the better-off workers ; for the League's success seemed to give the lie to the Chartist

contention that without the Charter nothing could be done to improve the condition of the people. The passing of the Ten Hours Act carried the same moral; and during the 'fifties the Chartists decisively lost their hold on the main body of the working class.

The middle classes, for their part, were too busy making money to press very hard for further political reforms, though in general they favoured a further extension of the franchise in order to reinforce them in their efforts for the completion of Free Trade and the removal of aristocratic privileges. In middle-class circles there was much advocacy of Household Suffrage as a compromise between the *status quo* and the Chartist demand for Manhood Suffrage. But the workers who fell away from the Chartist cause were not as yet disposed to become enthusiasts for a new campaign under middle-class leadership. They set to work instead to build their Trade Unions on surer foundations and to create successful Co-operative Societies on the model provided by the Rochdale Pioneers of 1844.

Only in the 'sixties did new forces begin to stir. Through the 'fifties Ernest Jones, at the head of what was left of the Chartist movement, had vainly preached to the workers an increasingly Socialist gospel. Influenced by Marx and Engels, he went on trying to stir the fervour of revolution in the minds of the workers. But few would listen to him. The British workers, escaping out of the acute miseries of the Hungry 'Forties into a somewhat kinder world, were not interested in Socialism or Revolution. For as long as British capitalism could maintain its prosperity, and throw to the workers an increasing number of crumbs from the rich man's table, the demon of British Revolution had been put safely to sleep. There was much dire poverty still at the bottom of the social scale; and it seems clear that the skilled workers—the aristocracy of labour—were improving their conditions much more rapidly than the unskilled urban workers or the toilers in the fields. But the improvement was widespread and substantial enough to do away with the possibility of mass-revolts based on sheer hunger, and to set the more skilled workers, the natural leaders of the workers' army, to the less

heroic tasks of building up their defences—Trade Unionism and Co-operation—within the general framework of a capitalist order which seemed much too strong and solid for any direct onslaught upon it to stand a chance of success.

CHAPTER III

THE SECOND REFORM MOVEMENT

From the Decline of Chartism to the Reform Act of 1867

THE echoes of Chartism had barely died away before a new movement for political reform began to develop. The initiative in the new campaign came in the first instance more from the middle-class Radicals of the school of John Bright than from the working classes. The first move was made on the North-East Coast, where Joseph Cowen in 1857 took the lead in forming the Northern Reform Union, in which the leaders of the Miners' and Ironworkers' Unions collaborated with the middle-class Radicals in the advocacy of an advanced programme of political reform.

There were stirrings in other areas. The Greater London constituencies had a tradition of Radicalism going back to the 'thirties ; and in 1859 they joined to form the North London Political Union, with Benjamin Lucraft, a cabinet-maker and a leader of metropolitan Trade Unionism, as its secretary. About the same time the Birmingham Radicals organized a Midland Counties Reform Association, and a national delegate conference, held in London, proposed the creation of a National Reform Association on the model of the Anti-Corn Law League. Lancashire and Yorkshire were also on the move ; and in 1861 the Leeds Working Men's Parliamentary Reform Association took the initiative in calling a conference of local societies, mainly in these counties, to consider the formation of a national body to conduct a crusade for reform in the industrial areas. This meeting led up to a national conference held in London in 1862, at which a number of Radical M.P.s were in attendance. On this occasion the delegates, after carrying a resolution in favour of Universal Suffrage, emphasized their practical moderation by calling for

the collaboration of classes in the Reform movement, and by urging Reformers to concentrate for the time being on the demand for Household Suffrage and the Ballot, to be accompanied by a redistribution of seats, instead of striking out, as the Chartists had done, for Universal Suffrage and the rest of the out-and-out Radical programme. The conference also urged that Reformers should demand Triennial, instead of Annual, Parliaments, and in general endorsed the programme of the middle-class Radicals as against the more extreme demands still put forward by the adherents of the Charter.

The effect of this re-emergence of the Reform movement under middle-class Radical leadership was to rouse the leaders of the working class to a sense of the need for re-asserting their claims. The Trade Unionists, in order to enlist support for the great London building dispute of 1859, had organized in 1860 the London Trades Council ; and this body, unlike the numerous Metropolitan Trades' Committees of earlier years, succeeded in establishing itself on a permanent basis as the representative organ of the London working class. Out of it emerged, in 1862, the Trade Union Political Union, with a programme which included Manhood Suffrage and Vote by Ballot as against the Household Suffrage programme of the middle-class Reformers. In the following year this body took the name of the Trade Union Manhood Suffrage and Vote by Ballot Association ; and the 'new model' Trade Unions, under the leadership of Robert Applegarth of the Carpenters, William Allan of the Engineers, and the rest of the group which Mr. and Mrs. Webb have called the 'Junta', threw their weight into the campaign for political reform.

Meanwhile, for a time, the distress caused by the 'Cotton Famine' during the American Civil War impeded the growth of the movement in the North of England ; but by 1864 a further conference of the Northern Reform societies was able to meet and establish the National Reform Union.

The powerful Trade Unions which had their stronghold in London retaliated to this move by holding in 1865 a conference of their own, at which they converted their Manhood Suffrage Association into a National Reform League. Thereafter there was intense rivalry between the two main bodies

which were attempting to canalize the Reform movement. Sharing, up to a point, a common objective, they were nevertheless in keen competition, each endeavouring to capture the allegiance of the main body of Reformers. Both associations were, in principle, advocates of Manhood Suffrage ; but, whereas the Union was prepared to compromise on Household Suffrage, the League, based mainly on the Trade Unions and on the working classes, stood out for the essential principle of the Charter, and made ' One Man, One Vote ' its principal rallying cry.

Manhood Suffrage, however, stood no chance of acceptance by either Whigs or Tories. As long as Lord Palmerston survived at the head of the Whig Party, the road to Reform was completely blocked ; and even after his death in 1865 the Whigs under Russell were by no means ready to go to the length of Manhood Suffrage. Even the very moderate Reform proposals of Lord John Russell in 1866 were enough to provoke a revolt in the Whig Party. The ' Cave of Adullam ', under Robert Lowe, rejected even a moderate reform, and the Whig Government fell, execrated by Radicals and Adullamites alike. The Tories, under Derby and Disraeli, profited by the Whig dissensions, and a Conservative Government came into office. But the Reform agitation in the country had already assumed such dimensions as to make some sort of Reform unavoidable. Disraeli, in a famous phrase, " caught the Whigs bathing, and stole their clothes ".

While Whigs and Tories were manœuvring and countermanœuvring for parliamentary position, the Reform movement throughout the country was gathering force. The National Reform Union, with a hundred and thirty branches, chiefly in the North and Midlands, was under the predominant influence of John Bright and the middle-class advocates of compromise. On the other hand, the National Reform League, centred chiefly on London and Birmingham, was dominated by the Trade Unions, and was standing out for Manhood Suffrage, with the support of the North-East Coast Radicals, who were organized in the Northern Political Union. The National Union and the League were at the same time rivals and allies. Compelled to collaborate in organizing

Reform meetings and demonstrations up and down the country, they manœuvred ceaselessly for position, each trying to secure a platform favourable to its own point of view. John Bright's oratory was the principal asset of the National Reform Union, whereas in most open meetings the League could be sure that a motion favouring Manhood as against Household Suffrage would secure the support of the majority of the audience. The outcome was an uneasy collaboration, in which the advocates of Manhood Suffrage were usually successful in packing the meetings, but the parliamentary Radicals got their own back by concentrating in the House of Commons on pushing first the Whigs and then the Tories as far as they could be induced to go. Clearly the most that could be achieved by constitutional means was an extension of the franchise falling a long way short of the demands of the working-class Radicals, but accompanied by a redistribution of seats which would give more members to London and to the rapidly growing industrial districts. The Ballot, too, could be pressed for, though it was certain to be strongly fought by the Tories and the great Whig landowners, as destructive of their ' natural influence ' over their tenants and dependents in the small towns and rural areas.

In the event, Reform came at the hands of the Tories. Disraeli's Reform Act, as amended in Parliament by the Radicals, fell a long way short of the demands of both wings of the Radical movement. In effect, what happened was that Disraeli conceded a big increase in the electorate in the towns, while refusing equivalent concessions in the county constituencies—the strongholds of the Tory agricultural interest. The Ballot was also refused ; but a substantial redistribution of seats put an end to most of the nearly rotten boroughs which had survived the purge of 1832, and split up the swollen constituencies of Greater London and a number of the bigger provincial towns. The ' fancy ' franchises, by which Disraeli had proposed to confer additional votes on University graduates and certain other privileged sections of the community, were defeated by Whig and Radical opposition ; and the Act, in its final form, was drastic enough profoundly to change the balance of forces in Parliament, and to compel both

parties to frame their policies for the future with more regard for the lower middle classes and for the upper strata of the working class.

The Act of 1867 nearly doubled the electorate. In England and Wales there were in 1866 just over a million electors—actually, 1,057,000. In 1869 there were 1,995,000. In Scotland, too, the numbers were about doubled—to roughly 250,000. But whereas the urban electorate in England and Wales rose from 514,000 to 1,203,000, the county voters rose only from 543,000 to 792,000. For the first time, the boroughs had more voters than the county areas, and there were a number of new urban constituencies which, on the face of the matter, looked like providing the parliamentary Radicals with a big accession of strength.

In fact, however, the 1867 Act was the end of the old 'Radical Party' in Parliament. There emerged from the new political situation what were virtually two new parties—the Conservatives replacing the Tories and the old Whig right wing, and the Liberals absorbing the Radicals as well as the main body of the Whigs. After the virtual completion of Free Trade in 1860, the abolition of the property qualification for M.P.s in 1858, the enlargement of the urban electorate in 1867, and the full legalization of joint-stock companies with limited liability in 1862, there was not enough left to hold middle-class Radicalism together as a parliamentary force. With the passing of Forster's Education Act in 1870, the reform of the Civil Service in the same year, and the enactment of Vote by Ballot in 1872, the old middle-class Radicalism expired; and for a time the energies of the more progressive elements in the middle classes went into building up the new Liberal Party under Gladstone's leadership, on a basis moderate enough to hold the allegiance of the main body of Whig politicians. Whiggery, in effect, became just Liberal enough to absorb the old Radicalism inside Parliament, though not for long to prevent the growth of a new Radicalism in the country.

This was the political situation when the working classes, represented primarily by the Trade Unions, secured for the first time a place in the electorate large enough, if they chose to use it, to make them a formidable parliamentary force.

There were, moreover, cogent reasons for them to desire to make full use of their new power. During the years immediately before 1867 the Trade Unions had been conducting a lively agitation for certain specific social and economic reforms, as well as for the extension of the suffrage. In 1864 a Trade Union Conference—the direct forerunner of the Trades Union Congress—had been held in London for the purpose of promoting a national agitation for the amendment of the laws relating to master and servant. Master and servant law, as it then stood, put the workman in a position of gross inferiority to his employer. If a workman left his employment without notice, thus breaking a " contract of service ", he was guilty of a crime, and could be imprisoned for it, whereas breach of contract by an employer was at most only a civil matter, and could give rise only to a civil claim for damages. Moreover, it was a criminal offence for a workman to quit his employment " leaving work unfinished "—a provision, dating from the days of small-scale handicraft, which was capable of being put to monstrous abuse under the conditions of the factory system.

Nor was this all. Under the general law of evidence, an accused person could not in those days give evidence on his own behalf. This prevented a workman from giving evidence in cases of alleged breach of contract ; but it did not prevent an employer, because in his case breach of contract was not, as the law stood, a crime, but only a ' civil wrong '. Moreover, a workman accused of these offences, including ordinary breach of contract, could be arrested and kept in prison pending trial ; and in Scotland, where the agitation for a change in the law was consequently strongest, this was the regular procedure, whereas in England the person accused was more often only summonsed to appear. In both countries, cases could be dealt with by a single magistrate, sitting very likely in his own house ; and there was no adequate safeguard against the magistrate being actually an employer in the trade concerned.

In practice, the chief sufferers under these laws were the miners, who were sentenced under them in greater numbers than all other classes of workers put together—very often for

refusing to descend the mines on account of defective safety precautions. The miners, under the leadership of Alexander Macdonald, had at this time been actively organizing their forces and bringing into existence a powerful National Miners' Association based on their separate county Unions, mainly for the purpose of demanding improved safety legislation and the legal protection of wages by the right to appoint checkweighmen freely without the fear that this right, nominally granted in 1860, would be nullified in practice by the prompt dismissal of any checkweighman who did his job properly. The famous Leeds Miners' Conference of 1863 had formulated a combined programme for the industry ; and the London Trade Union Conference of 1864 was an attempt to mobilize the entire Trade Union movement behind one part of this programme which concerned workers in every trade.

There were other groups beside the miners who were on the move with demands for social reform. The Factory Acts, up to the early 'sixties, applied only to the textile industries and to a few very closely allied trades. But with the growth of the factory system there were hundreds of thousands of workers in non-textile factories needing legal protection fully as much as the textile operatives. Most of these trades were, however, weakly organized ; and the women and children, to whom alone there was any chance of Parliament giving direct protection, were not organized at all. It needed the support of philanthropists of the type of Shaftesbury to get anything done for these victims of the factory system ; but Tory philanthropy also needed the stimulus of working-class agitation, and this was provided, not only by the Factory Reform Committees in the textile areas, which had resumed their activities in the 'sixties after a lull following the conclusion of the Ten Hours struggle, but also by such organized trades as the Potters, the Bookbinders, and certain branches of the metal-working industries. In 1864 an important Factory Act extended the scope of legislative protection to include workers in a number of specified dangerous or unhealthy trades. But much more than this was wanted ; and the agitation went on.

In 1867, before the new electorate had come into play, Parliament gave clear signs of its intention to make a bid for the

support of the working classes. In that year, the grievances of the workers over the law relating to labour contracts were partly met by the Master and Servant Act, and, by a sweeping change, factory legislation was made applicable to every manufacturing establishment employing more than fifty persons, and at the same time smaller establishments, described as ' workshops ', were made subject to a lesser degree of regulation. Neither of these measures fully met the need. The regulation of workshops was left ineffective because of the absence of proper provision for inspection ; and the new Master and Servant Act still left the workman in a position of serious inferiority. He was, indeed, now allowed to give evidence on his own behalf ; and summons, instead of summary arrest, became the normal procedure in Scotland as well as England. Two justices were needed to hear the case, and there were safeguards against the presence of interested employers on the Bench. But a magistrate could still order summary arrest if he thought the workman might abscond before trial ; and the workman could still be fined (and not merely made to pay civil damages) for ordinary breach of contract, and could be imprisoned where the magistrates held that the breach was of an " aggravated " character.

The Trade Unions had then, in 1867, the essentials of a programme of legislative reform to work for in the newly reformed Parliament. They wanted stronger factory legislation, especially for small establishments ; mines legislation designed to check the appalling growth of accidents brought about by deeper mining and the rapidly growing demand for coal ; and a further change in the law of master and servant, to put employer and workman on a really equal footing before the courts. In addition, there were many other reforms the demand for which was common to the Trade Unions and the rest of the poorer part of the population. The abolition of imprisonment for debt, drastic reform of the criminal law and the cheapening of legal proceedings in general, the recognition of employers' liability for accidents, the provision everywhere of public elementary schools free from ecclesiastical control, the reform of the land laws, State action against insanitary housing conditions, were all part of the Radical stock-in-trade.

But in 1867 the Trade Unions were given an even stronger reason than any of these for wishing to make their power felt in the House of Commons. For, in effect, during the next few years the movement found itself engaged in a desperate struggle for the right to live at all. The employers in many industries had launched a frontal attack on the right of combination ; and the authorities of the law had taken the field against the Unions with a judicial decision which imperilled the funds painfully built up by the 'new model' Unions of the skilled craftsmen—the Engineers, Carpenters, Cotton Spinners, Compositors, and other groups who had organized their Unions on a basis of high contributions to serve them as friendly societies as well as instruments of industrial negotiation with their employers.

The Trade Union crisis began with a series of big strikes and lock-outs, chiefly in the North. In 1864 there were extensive stoppages in the Staffordshire and Yorkshire coalfields ; and in 1865 occurred the big dispute in the Staffordshire iron industry, which ended in the defeat of the workers and the acceptance of reduced wages. There was also a big lock-out in this year in the heavy woollen trade of Dewsbury. In 1866 the ironworkers of the North-Eastern area fought unsuccessfully against a cut in wages ; and the Tyne stonemasons and the Clyde engineers and shipbuilders struck successfully for a reduction in working hours. In this year, the boom began to break, and there were many lock-outs, especially among the miners.

Under the influence of this spirit of industrial warfare the Trade Unions, meeting in conference at Sheffield, attempted to create a central organization for resistance to the employers' demands for wage-reductions. The new body, which went by the name of the United Kingdom Alliance of Organized Trades, was to be used only for resisting wage-reductions and not for securing improved conditions ; and it was to be made up exclusively of trades which were well enough organized to have some funds and some stability of their own. It lasted for some years ; but most of the big Unions remained aloof, and in particular it received practically no support from the 'new model' societies which had their headquarters in London.

The leaders of the Engineers, the Carpenters, and other important Unions of the skilled craftsmen preferred to rely on their own resources in dealing with the employers. Following in the main a pacific policy, they felt no wish to become involved in the more turbulent conflicts of the Miners and Ironworkers of the North.

There was, indeed, in 1866 a special and additional reason why the new model 'Amalgamated Societies' were unwilling to risk their respectability by association with the Unions in the North, and in particular with the Sheffield Trade Societies. For in 1866 occurred the series of incidents known to history as the 'Sheffield Outrages'. For many years some of the small Unions in the Sheffield iron and cutlery trades had maintained practices which had died out in the rest of the Trade Union movement, as a means of dealing with blacklegs and keeping a tight hold over the conditions of employment. These practices, commonly known as 'rattening', included the forcing of men by intimidation to join the Unions, the destruction of tools belonging to blacklegs, and even the resort to serious personal violence. In 1866, as the culmination of a series of less dramatic incidents, a can of gunpowder was thrown down the chimney of a blackleg who had made himself particularly obnoxious to one of the Unions, and a serious explosion occurred. The employers, already in full cry against the Unions on account of their resistance to wage-reductions, were joined by the newspapers in denouncing the Sheffield Outrages, not merely in themselves, but as if the whole Trade Union movement had been responsible for them. There was a widespread demand for legislation to put down the Trade Union movement—even for the re-enactment of the Combination Laws repealed in 1824.

This danger roused every section of the movement to activity; for the threat affected Unions of every type. But it did not cause the Unions to take fully united action. The pacific Amalgamated Societies, led by Robert Applegarth of the Carpenters and William Allan of the Engineers, believed that they were likely to do the best for themselves by acting apart from the main body of Unions in the North. They had friends in Parliament, notably the Christian Socialist, Thomas

Hughes ; and they felt that their best hope lay in giving the plainest possible proof of their own immunity from violent and lawless practices. Accordingly, the Trade Unions met the peril with divided forces.

In 1867 a further danger appeared—one which affected especially the Amalgamated Societies with their relatively large accumulated funds. It had been the common practice for these Unions to take advantage of the Friendly Societies Act of 1855 in order to protect their funds against default by local officials. But now, in the famous case of *Hornby* v. *Close*, between the Boilermakers' Society and one of its local agents, the Courts decided that a Trade Union could not enjoy the protection of the Friendly Societies Act because it was a body established for the purpose of ' restraint of trade ', and therefore illegal at common law, though not positively criminal, in view of the statutory sanction given to combinations by the Act of 1825. In other words, though it was no longer a crime to form a Trade Union, workmen's combinations were still so tainted with illegality that they could not make use of the law courts for the protection of their funds.

Under this double threat, the leaders of the Amalgamated Societies were faced with the need, not merely to prevent fresh legislation directed against combinations, but also to get the existing law altered so as to protect their funds. They therefore, instead of trying to narrow the issue to a merely local question of the outrages at Sheffield, had to press for a full investigation of the entire Trade Union case, and try to turn what had been an attack on Trade Unionism into a means of securing for it an assured legal status. The Government was proposing at this stage a Royal Commission to enquire into the alleged misdeeds of the Unions ; but the Union leaders, aided by their middle-class friends in and out of Parliament, got the reference widened so as to include the entire question of Trade Union rights.

In order to conduct their campaign, the leaders of the Amalgamated Societies set up a brand-new organization of their own—the Conference of Amalgamated Trades, thus excluding both the smaller London Societies which belonged to the London Trades Council and the main body of Trade

Unionists in the North of England. It had been decided at the Sheffield Conference of 1866 that a further National Trade Union Conference should be held in London in 1867. But the London Trades Council, dominated by the leaders of the Amalgamated Societies, refused to call this Conference, much to the annoyance of a militant minority of London workers, headed by George Potter, the London builders' leader in the great strike and lock-out of 1859. Potter and his friends, acting through a body called the London Working Men's Association—of which more anon—summoned the National Conference in face of the refusal of the London Trades Council ; and it was held and attended by delegates from the Miners', Ironworkers', and other Northern Unions. It elected a committee of its own to take charge of the Trade Union case before the Royal Commission ; and there were thus two rival Trade Union bodies—the committee chosen by the Trade Union Conference on the one hand and the self-appointed Conference of Amalgamated Trades on the other—each purporting to be the true voice of the Trade Union movement.

The scales were, however, at this stage heavily weighted against Potter and his friends, who had no backers in Parliament and few middle-class supporters to help them. With the aid of Thomas Hughes and of the Positivist lawyer, Frederic Harrison, who did masterly work in preparing the Trade Union case, Allen and Applegarth successfully elbowed their rivals out of the way. Applegarth, though not a member of the Commission—for no workman had ever up to that time been accorded such an honour—was allowed to attend its proceedings and to marshal the Trade Union witnesses, whereas Thomas Connolly, of the Stonemasons, the appointed representative of the Trade Union Conference, was excluded. With great skill, the Amalgamated Societies were made to appear in the most favourable light, and the Commission was led to turn its attention to the possibility of favourable as well as unfavourable changes in the law. A temporary Trade Union (Protection of Funds) Act was secured in 1869, pending the Commission's final report ; and the Northern Unions became more disposed to forgive the tactics of the

Amalgamated Societies when they saw with what apparent success the case was being managed.

The ' Amalgamated ' leaders, for their part, did not want to quarrel with the rest of the movement, provided that they could get their own way. The Trade Union Conference had decided to meet in 1868 in Manchester ; and to this meeting the Conference sent George Howell, of the Bricklayers, with an olive branch. This Manchester gathering is of special importance because it decided to make the Trades Union Congress a regular annual affair. It is indeed regarded by the Trades Union Congress of to-day as the occasion of its foundation, though that honour more properly belongs to the London Trade Union Conference of 1864.

The Trade Union movement, then, at the very moment of the extension of the franchise to a substantial fraction of the working class, found itself engaged in a struggle for the legal right to exist and to carry on its work, and divided about the best way of tackling the problem. This situation had a great deal to do with the use made by the Unions of their new opportunities of political power ; for the first and most important thing to do was clearly, from their point of view, to secure their legal status, and nothing else immediately mattered to them in comparison with that need. It is necessary to bear this fact continually in mind in considering the steps taken by the movement during these years in the parliamentary field. During the period immediately after the Reform Act of 1867 the Trade Unions first made a tentative approach through creating a Labour Party, and then drew back—why and how we shall see in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

LABOUR REPRESENTATION—THE FIRST EFFORT

The London Working Men's Association and the Election of 1868

MR. A. W. HUMPHREY, my predecessor in writing the history of the political Labour movement, begins his book with an acceptance of the claims of George Jacob Holyoake, the well-known Co-operative and Secularist leader, to have been the pioneer of working-class representation in Parliament. This claim is based on the fact that in 1857 Holyoake appeared as a candidate in the well-known London Radical constituency of Tower Hamlets—an appearance promptly followed by his withdrawal in favour of a middle-class Radical, A. S. Ayrton, who proceeded to win the seat.

From what has already been written in this book it will be evident that this claim is baseless. William Newton, of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, who was quite as much a working man as Holyoake, had, as we have seen, fought this very seat in 1852, polling over a thousand votes; and the compositor, Henry Vincent, had fought numerous contests on behalf of Chartism, and was by no means the only working man who had actually gone to the poll in Chartist days. Holyoake's half-hearted attempt of 1857 was not, as has been suggested, the first pioneering effort. It was rather one of the flickers of the dying working-class Radicalism which had been responsible for the Chartist and near-Chartist candidatures of the 'forties.

The new chapter in the history of Labour representation begins, not in 1857, but ten years later, on the immediate morrow of the Reform Act of 1867. It begins with the issue, over the signatures of twenty-four leading Trade Unionists, of a manifesto " to the People of England on the Direct Representation of Labour in Parliament ". This manifesto, dated

November 12th, 1867, emanated from a body called the London Working Men's Association, which had been founded in the previous year, with George Potter as its Chairman and Robert Hartwell, a compositor who had been active in the Chartist movement, as its Secretary. Earlier in 1867, as we have seen in the previous chapter, this body had been responsible for calling in London the Trade Union Conference which the London Trades Council had refused to convene.

Founded before Disraeli had brought forward his Reform Bill, the London Working Men's Association had as its original objects "to procure the political enfranchisement of the workers and promote the social and general interests of the industrial classes". It was thus, despite its action in summoning the 1867 Trade Union Conference, from the outset a political rather than an industrial body; and during its first year or so of existence it was mainly active in organizing the London Trade Unions in connection with the Reform struggle. The L.W.M.A., rather than the London Trades Council or the National Reform League, was the body which brought the London workmen out on the streets to demonstrate for Reform. It stood, in method if not in policy, well to the left of these more respectable bodies, claiming to uphold the Chartist tradition against the new moderation of the so-called Junta. George Potter, its leader, was the chief rival of Allan and Applegarth in the struggle for the control of the London movement; and it was an ironical fact that among the L.W.M.A. leaders who signed the manifesto of 1867 with Potter and Hartwell, the best-known names in Labour history are those of Henry Broadhurst and Joseph Leicester, who were to become later the leaders of the 'Lib.-Labs.' in their struggle against the rising force of Socialism. Broadhurst held office in a Liberal Government and was Hardie's principal antagonist when the Socialists were trying to bring the Trades Union Congress over to the policy of independent Labour representation. Leicester sat for a time as 'Lib.-Lab.' member for South-West Ham; and it was he who was pushed out of the way to make room for Hardie when the latter won the seat in 1892.

In 1867, however, Broadhurst and Leicester were with

Potter and Hartwell, well to the left of the leaders of the Amalgamated Societies. The manifesto of November, 1867, was the sequel to three resolutions moved by Hartwell during the previous month. The first of these urged "That, as legislative action on the subject of Trade Unions, and upon questions affecting labour and capital generally, will, in all probability, be undertaken by the first Reformed Parliament, elected under the Reform Act of last session, this Association strongly recommends to their fellow working men throughout the country the desirability of a united effort being made to procure a direct representation of labour interests by the return of working men to Parliament". The second resolution proposed the raising of a Working-Men's Parliamentary Election Fund, to be invested in London in the hands of trustees, and to be used for meeting the expenses "attending upon the election of approved working-class candidates". The third called upon Co-operative Societies, Trades Councils, and other working-class organizations to take common action in arranging to contest suitable seats.

The object of the L.W.M.A. was thus specifically to promote the election to Parliament of working men—an object made practicable by the extension of the franchise in the towns, and given special urgency by the fact that the whole position of Trade Unions was certain to be brought under review in the new Parliament. Neither in the resolutions nor in the manifesto was there any proposal to form a new party; nor was the idea of forming a separate working-class party present in the minds of the L.W.M.A. leaders any more than in those of the more moderate leaders of the London Trades Council and the Amalgamated Societies. It is, however, easy to misunderstand the meaning of this omission. It did not mean in 1867, as it came to mean later, that the working men were content to sit in Parliament as members of the Liberal Party. It could not mean this, because in 1867 the Liberal Party, in the form which it takes in the mind of a modern reader, did not exist. In 1867 there were still in Parliament, besides Whigs and Tories, Radicals or Liberals of varying colour standing to the left of both the official parties. But the Radicals did not form a party, and never had. They were a group, of which some

members were fairly closely attached to the Whigs, whereas others had won and held their seats against Whig opposition, or at any rate without Whig help. Quite commonly, in the Parliaments elected between 1832 and 1867, Whigs and 'Liberals' or Radicals had fought each other, though more often in the more recent years either the Whig or the Radical candidate had been persuaded to withdraw in order to avoid letting in the Tory.

It was in these circumstances perfectly natural that, when the question arose of getting workmen elected to Parliament, the idea should be to send them there not as a party, but as independents who would collaborate loosely with such middle-class Radicals as Thomas Hughes, the Christian Socialist, and John Stuart Mill. If the middle-class Radicals had been able to act effectively in this way, without forming a party, why should not the working-class Radicals do the same? It was not foreseen in 1867 that one effect of the Reform Act would be the disappearance of the Radicals, and the reorganization of Parliament on much stricter party lines, so as to make the Radical skirmishing tactics of the previous decades impossible. It was still quite natural in 1867 to think of getting working men into the House of Commons without meaning either to form a new party or to identify them with either of the existing parties.

It is important to clear away any misunderstandings on this matter because they cause further misunderstandings. When we find middle-class Radicals such as Mill, Layard, and Hughes sometimes urging the workmen to fight and sometimes calling upon them to withdraw, this does not mean that they are merely blowing hot and cold. Quite often it means that the workmen are being urged to fight Whigs, but not middle-class Radicals, though it does also sometimes mean that they are urged not to fight a Whig, where the result would probably be a Tory victory. The Radicals regarded themselves as distinct from the Whigs, and as entitled to the help of the new working-class electorate.

The situation will be best understood if it is considered in terms of the party machinery of the time. There existed in 1867 no Whig or Liberal party organization, with its branches

in the constituencies throughout the country. In most places there were Whig caucuses, based not on a wide membership, but on the undemocratic process of co-option by the leading Whigs of the area. In some places there were, side by side with these Whig caucuses, Radical or Democratic Clubs or Associations, not identified with the Whig Party, and based on a fairly wide middle-class and working-class membership. These were the bodies which ran ' Liberal ' or ' Radical ' candidates ; and in some areas they had made themselves strong enough to beat the Whig caucus out of the field, and capture the undisputed right to contest the seat against the Tories. In other places they were in hot conflict with the Whig caucus ; and both groups would put their candidates in the field—one or the other sometimes withdrawing when it saw that its nominee had no chance of victory.

These Radical or Democratic Associations and Clubs had no uniform doctrine. Up to 1867 they naturally tended to represent the attitudes of the lower middle-classes. But some of them were practically in the pocket of the M.P. whom they helped to elect—either because of his personal popularity or because he found the money to maintain them. Gradually, as the Liberal Party took shape after 1867, these bodies became its accredited local agents ; and they were later to be used again as the basis for the revived Radicalism of Chamberlain and Dilke. But in 1867 the Liberal Party was still in the making, and the old independent Radicalism did not realize that it was at the point of death.

Clearly, the easiest way for a working man to get into Parliament in the years after 1867 was to get nominated by one of the local Radical Associations, and then if possible to prevent the Whig caucus from putting up a rival candidate—or two candidates where the constituency returned two members. This did not mean, in 1867, joining the Liberal Party. It only came to mean that later on, for reasons which will be noted in their place.

Of course, this would not have been the position if the working men who proposed to stand for Parliament had been revolutionary Socialists, or Marxists, or even Socialists of any sort. But they were not. They were Radicals. This is quite

as true of George Potter and the London Working Men's Association as it is of the 'Junta'. In 1867, though the International Working Men's Association had existed for three years, with its headquarters in London and Marx as its leader; though the outstanding figures in British Trade Unionism, such as Robert Applegarth, George Odger, and George Howell, were prominently associated with the I.W.M.A. as members of its General Council; though there were old Owenites such as Lloyd Jones and Weston, and old Chartists such as Hartwell among the active leaders of working-class opinion—there was in Great Britain not even the shadow of a Socialist movement, or of any movement with a thought-out plan for changing the basis of the social system. There were, no doubt, individuals with revolutionary and with Socialist ideas. But there was no Socialist movement.

This came out clearly in the terms of the programme which, under the heading "Our Platform", the London Working Men's Association appended to its manifesto of 1867. This programme began by declaring for residential and registered Manhood Suffrage, further Redistribution of seats in accordance with population, the Ballot, and the return of working men to Parliament. It went on to demand the abolition of Church rates, a reform of the law relating to landlords and tenants, and the removal of the evils due to class-legislation. Under the heading 'Social' it advocated a national system of unsectarian education, legal protection of Trade Union rights, the reduction of hours of labour to the lowest level consistent with the maintenance of production, the promotion of Co-operation and Co-partnership, legislation to improve housing and workshop conditions, and, finally, the promotion of emigration to the colonies.

We have here what was left unachieved of the old Radical programme, *plus* certain specific working-class demands. What we have not is any hint at all of a basic change in the economic system. Yet this programme came from a group which had a record of industrial militancy, and was reputed to represent the left wing of the London Labour movement.

For the rest, the manifesto itself was chiefly concerned with rebutting the view that care for working-class interests in

Parliament could safely be left to the middle-class Radicals, and that the return of working men as such would involve a dangerous and undesirable form of " class-representation ". The manifestants argued, first, that upon the pending issues of Trade Union rights and working-class conditions no one could put the workers' case before Parliament so well as men who had actually experienced working-class disabilities, and secondly, that workmen in the House of Commons would be no more " class-representatives " than persons belonging to other social classes.

> Providing a careful selection of working-class candidates be made, there is no reason why they should stand isolated as a class in Parliament any more than the special representatives of other interests now sitting there. . . . We believe that, after the first novelty of their appearance in the House has worn off, they will, insensibly and imperceptibly, blend with the other members in the performance of the usual duties expected from members of the Legislature. . . . We presume that the working-class candidate, in addressing a constituency, would do as all other candidates do —appeal to the electors generally, and not to those of a particular interest.

Such was the language of the left wing of the London Labour movement in 1867. It must, however, be borne in mind that the only basis on which workmen could in fact hope to secure election to Parliament after 1867 was that suggested by the L.W.M.A. ; for the suffrage had not been made wide enough to offer any chance of success to candidates who appealed only to the class-conscious working man.

As for the middle-class Radicals, who claimed to be the guardians of democratic interests in Parliament, their reception of the claim of working men to sit there was mixed and hesitant. Some of them, while Radical enough when it was a question of abolishing Church rates or Church control over education, or of advocating the ballot or a further extension of the suffrage, were strongly opposed to Trade Unionism and to further intervention by the State in industrial affairs, such as the hours of labour. Others, even if they favoured the Trade Union case, found difficulty in regarding workmen as eligible for election to the gentlemen's club at Westminster. And yet others, eager in theory to see working men returned to Parlia-

ment, began to see difficulties as soon as there was any danger that the appearance of a working-class candidate might cause a Tory to beat a Whig. Even the most friendly of the middle-class Radicals were to be found, during the next few years, discovering reasons why the workmen should withdraw their nominees in order to avoid splitting " the progressive vote ".

In 1867, however, these difficulties were in the future ; and the L.W.M.A. launched its manifesto at a time when the whole political situation seemed so fluid as to admit of almost any innovation. The first test of the new conditions came in 1868, when Disraeli appealed to the enlarged electorate to show its gratitude to the Tories by giving him a clear Conservative majority.

There had been little time for the working-class organizations to respond to the L.W.M.A.'s appeal. The proposed Convention of delegates from all parts of the country which was to concert the working-class campaign had not met ; and no parliamentary fund had been created to finance workmen's candidatures. Local organizations were left to act on their own responsibility, as best they could ; and only in a few areas had any steps been taken to put working-men candidates into the field. In the event, only three seats were actually fought. William Randall Cremer, of the Carpenters' and Joiners' Society, fought Warwick—a two-member constituency which the Whigs and Tories had agreed to share. He had only one Whig and one Tory against him ; and the body promoting his candidature was the Warwick Working Men's Liberal Association. In view of the Whig-Tory pact, he had the support of the middle-class Radicals, including Mill, Henry Fawcett, and P. A. Taylor. But he polled only 260 votes, against 873 for the Whig and 863 for the Tory.

George Howell, the bricklayer who had been Secretary of the National Reform League and of the London Trades Council, fought at Aylesbury. He too was the nominee of a local working-men's association, and had the support of John Stuart Mill. Like Cremer, he had only two rivals for the two seats—one Whig and one Tory. He polled 950 votes, against 1,772 for the Whig—a Rothschild—and 1,468 for the Tory.

The third candidate who went to the poll was Edward Owen

Greening, the well-known Co-operator. He forced a contest at Halifax, where the two Liberals (they were Liberals rather than Whigs in his case) would otherwise have been returned unopposed. One of the two, Colonel Edward Ackroyd—the other was James Stansfield, the promoter of the Contagious Diseases Act—wrote to Thomas Hughes asking him to persuade Greening to withdraw. Hughes did his best; but Greening persisted in standing, and polled 2,802 votes against 5,278 for Stansfield and 5,141 for his colleague. Greening's contest stands rather apart from the other two. Though an active Co-operator, he was not strictly speaking a working man; and his campaign in Halifax can perhaps be regarded rather as the last kick of the old Chartism than as a promising effort of the new movement for Labour representation. Halifax was an old Chartist battleground. Ernest Jones had fought there four times between 1847 and 1859.

On this occasion Ernest Jones contested Manchester, which had been presented with a third seat by the Reform Act of 1867. Jones, who was now practising at Manchester as a barrister—he defended the prisoners in the famous Lancashire Fenian trials—had been converted to support of the new movements for political reform, and had taken an active part in stirring up Lancashire in the cause of the National Reform League. He had against him at Manchester, for the three seats, three Liberals and two Conservatives. One of the Liberals was Jacob Bright, who was an advanced Radical. The election resulted in the return of a Conservative at the head of the poll, with 15,486 votes, followed by Thomas Barley and Jacob Bright, Liberals, with 14,192 and 13,514. The second Conservative got 12,684, and Jones 10,662 votes, and the third Liberal was at the bottom, with 5,236. Thus the enlarged electorate of 1868 came within measurable distance of returning to Parliament the old leader of Chartism.

Besides Cremer and Howell, there were other working-class candidates; but they did not reach the poll. Hartwell first arranged to fight Lambeth as the colleague of Thomas Hughes, against both Whigs and Tories. But Hughes accepted an invitation to stand for Frome instead; and Hartwell was unable to face the expense of going on with the

contest alone. Hartwell then agreed to stand for Stoke-on-Trent, where two Whigs and two Tories were in the field for the two seats. The L.W.M.A. tried to raise money for him, and he appeared in the constituency with a manifesto signed on his behalf by the officers of two hundred trade societies in London and the provinces. But the local association which had invited him made no attempt to collect funds ; and London did not meet the deficiency. Hartwell had to withdraw, after incurring personal responsibility for election expenses of £360. He was criticized for accepting an offer of £280 from his Whig opponents on condition of his withdrawal. But what was he to do ? Even with the £280 he came out of the contest in sore financial straits.

A similar lack of funds enforced the withdrawal of Alexander Macdonald, the miners' leader, who had proposed to contest Kilmarnock. George Jacob Holyoake offered himself to the electors of Birmingham, but withdrew when he found how little support he was likely to get. Finally, George Odger, the secretary of the London Trades Council, the leading orator among the London workmen and a prominent member of the 'Junta' group, was put forward for Chelsea as the colleague of Charles Dilke by the Chelsea Working Men's Electoral Association, but finally withdrew in order not to split the 'Liberal' vote.

Chelsea, under Dilke's leadership, was in those days a great Radical stronghold. The Working Men's Electoral Association was a powerful organization with a wide membership. In the ballot for the choice of candidates for the two seats it gave Dilke 88 votes, Odger 66, and Sir Henry Hoare, the Whig nominee, only 16. But Hoare persisted in standing, on the ground that he had been in the field before Odger was proposed. Finally, the case between Hoare and Odger was, by consent, submitted to arbitration by three middle-class Radicals—Hughes, Stansfield, and P. A. Taylor—and three Whigs, and the arbitrators recommended that Odger should withdraw. He did withdraw, much to the annoyance of a large section of the London working class. He was accused of having been heavily bribed to get out of Hoare's road ; but the charge seems to have been baseless. It was denied by the

arbitrators, who stated that on the contrary Odger had refused to receive any sum to reimburse him for the expenses which he had incurred.

Thus the newly enfranchised section of the workers made its first ineffectual bid for representation in Parliament. Three candidates defeated at the polls, and a few others withdrawn before polling day, was not a very formidable challenge to the old order. But there had been little time, and no real machinery existed for the promotion of the workers' claims. The election had come too soon for anything to be done on the lines proposed by the L.W.M.A. in its manifesto of November, 1867.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST WORKMEN M.P.s

The Labour Representation League. The Election of 1874

After 1868 no more is heard of the London Working Men's Association as the protagonist of a national movement for working-class representation. But early in 1869 we find at least three separate groups at work in London on plans for a new political organization. One of these groups was closely connected with George Potter, who was now attempting to create a body not consisting exclusively of workmen, and had secured the collaboration of a number of middle-class Radicals, including two barristers, Richard Marsden Latham and F. W. Campin, as well as of Trade Unionists such as Connolly of the Stonemasons, whom we have met with already as Potter's collaborator in 1867.

A second group centred round William Randall Cremer, the joiner who had fought Warwick in the 1868 election. Cremer was at this time still fairly closely connected with the International Working Men's Association, and his main support seems to have been among the London Trade Unionists who were on the General Council of the I.W.M.A. His collaborators included Thomas Mottershead and John Hales, who was subsequently Secretary to the British Council of the I.W.M.A.

The third group consisted of the leaders of the Amalgamated Societies and their friends, reinforced by the old Owenite, Lloyd Jones. In January, 1869, Allan, Applegarth, Newton, Odger, Howell and Lloyd Jones met and drew up the preliminary plans for a Working Men's Parliamentary Association, with the primary purpose of putting forward working-class candidates for Parliament.

In these three separate instances can be seen both the

rivalries which still held apart the Junta and the Potterites in the London movement and the divisions of opinion which existed about the form which working-class political action ought to take. Allan and Applegarth seem to have been thinking in terms of a purely Trade Union body, whereas Potter and his friends wanted to bring in middle-class Radicals, partly, no doubt, for financial reasons, but also because they were thinking in terms of Radical politics rather than merely of working-class representation as such.

There followed, chiefly on Latham's initiative, negotiations between the rival groups. Despite a quarrel—by no means the first—between Potter and Odger, and despite the reluctance of Allan, Applegarth, Newton, and Lloyd Jones to collaborate with Potter, Latham finally persuaded all three groups to come together with a view to forming a single organization. It appears likely, from Howell's account of the negotiations, that the 'Junta' leaders were induced to agree to this wider basis for the movement only because it was made plain that, if they did not, Potter, Latham, Cremer and the others would carry on without them.

Out of these negotiations arose the Labour Representation League, with Latham as its first President, William Allan as its Treasurer, and Lloyd Jones as its Secretary. The objects of the League, as defined in the prospectus which it issued shortly after its foundation, were clearly the result of a compromise.

> The League will promote throughout the kingdom the registration of working-men's votes without reference to their opinions or party bias ; its aim being to organize fully the strength of the operative classes as an electoral power, so that, when necessary, it may be brought to bear, with effect, on any important political, social, or industrial question in the issue of which their interests are involved.
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> Its principal duty will be to secure the return to Parliament of qualified working men—persons who, by character and ability, command the confidence of their class, and who are competent to deal satisfactorily with questions of general interest as well as with those in which they are specially interested. Beyond this, it will, where deemed necessary, recommend and support as candidates from among the other classes such persons as have studied the great Labour problem and have proved themselves friendly to an equitable settlement of the many difficult points which it involves.

Thus, while the election of working men was defined as the primary object of the L.R.L., it was also authorized, where it thought fit, to support other candidates favourable to working-class claims. In accordance with this definition of its aims membership was made open not only to working men at 1*s*. per annum (1*s*. a quarter having been originally proposed), but also to persons of other classes—at 10*s*. per annum. Provision was further made for Honorary Members, at not less than a guinea a year.

The L.R.L., at the time of its formation, was to all intents and purposes a London body. On its Executive sat the most prominent leaders of all sections of the London trades, and of the Amalgamated Societies which had their head offices in London. Allan and Newton, of the Engineers, Applegarth, of the Carpenters and Joiners, Daniel Guile, of the Ironfounders, Edwin Coulson and George Howell, of the Bricklayers, George Shipton, of the Painters, and George Odger, of the Ladies' Shoemakers, represented the 'Junta' group. Of these, Odger was also Secretary of the London Trades Council, and Howell had been Secretary of the National Reform League. Rival tendencies were represented by George Potter, formerly the London builders' leader, but now manager and editor of the *Bee-Hive*, the principal working-class newspaper; by Randall Cremer, of the Carpenters, but not at this stage a partisan of the 'Junta'; by John Hales, the President of the Elastic Web Weavers, actively associated with the International Working Men's Association; by Thomas Connolly, of the Stonemasons; by George Druitt, the Secretary of the London Tailors, who had been sentenced to imprisonment in connection with their big strike in 1867; by John Dunning, the much-respected Secretary of the Bookbinders; and by Thomas Mottershead, the silk weaver, also prominent in the I.W.M.A. Holyoake and Lloyd Jones, and the two barristers, Latham and Campin, represented the non-Trade Union elements on the Committee. But the L.R.L. did not at this stage include any of the leaders of the Northern Unions. There were no miners, no cotton or woollen operatives, no ironworkers. Such leading figures as Alexander Macdonald, John Kane, and Alexander Campbell were not connected with it.

The L.R.L. was not, however, intended to remain a purely London organization. Though it was to be governed by an Annual General Meeting to be held in London, there were provisions for the founding of provincial branches, and each branch was to be entitled to appoint two delegates to sit on the General Council. Branches were to retain half of the subscriptions received by them, and to remit the other half to the Head Office, which in return was to do its best to provide them with literature, speakers, and help in the choice and promotion of candidates. All candidates run under League auspices were to require the approval of a majority of the Executive, and were to be chosen in consultation with the local branches.

The plan of the L.R.L. thus included a scheme of national organization. But it does not appear that this part of the plan was ever realized. The local bodies with which the League collaborated in running candidates during the ensuing decade were not branches, but independent local associations, generally Working Men's Radical Associations based on individual membership rather than on Trade Union affiliation or on any direct relationsip to the League. This was, no doubt, partly because the working-class Radicals in the industrial districts were not prepared to become subordinate to a body run from London. But it was also because the L.R.L. deliberately refrained from bringing the Trade Unions into politics as corporate bodies. Allan, Applegarth, and the other Union leaders sat on the Committee in their personal capacities, and not as representing their societies. There was nothing in their connection with the League that involved the participation of the Engineers' or Carpenters' branches up and down the country. The Northern leaders, in fact, instead of rallying to the L.R.L., put their energies into the building up of the Trades Union Congress; and working-class political activity remained on a local basis, though many of the local associations retained some connection with the National Reform Union at Manchester, which had not, like the National Reform League in London, gone out of existence on the passing of the Reform Act of 1867.

The L.R.L. was not then, despite its impressive marshalling

of the rival London leaders under a single banner, a very powerful organization. It is, indeed, somewhat doubtful whether the Junta, which formed the most coherent and competent group within it, wanted it to be very powerful, or at any rate continued to do so for more than a very short period after its foundation. They had, at all events, no intention of allowing it to become an instrument of the policies either of Potter and his friends or of Karl Marx's I.W.M.A.

The most remarkable thing about the Labour Representation League was that it started practically without a programme. Its initial prospectus was singularly vague about the causes which its candidates, whether workmen or persons of other classes, were to support.

> The Labour Representation League will direct its attention to other matters connected with the interests of Labour [i.e. besides putting forward candidates]. It will aim at promoting all such political, industrial, and social questions as involve the well-being of the working classes. It will watch the progress of Bills in Parliament, which deal with working-men's interests. It will promote Bills necessary for their security and welfare. It will collect and, where action calls for it, report on such Parliamentary papers and other documents as may contain useful information in relation to the masses of the people . . . and will arrange and assist such deputations as may be needed to wait on Ministers of the Crown or Members of Parliament. In short, it will seek to accomplish, by a well-arranged and constantly acting economical machinery, most of what is now done in a desultory, ineffective, and expensive manner ; or, what is worse still, left altogether unattended.

Now, the return of working men to Parliament was one thing, and the attempt to create a parliamentary Radical movement based on an alliance between working men and middle-class Radicals was another. If the former alone was intended, the protagonists might be able to dispense with a programme ; but for the latter a programme was a *sine qua non.* When the Labour Representation League presented itself with no programme of action beyond these mere generalities, the movement was in effect committing itself to the former conception of its purpose. In practice, despite Latham's presence as President of the League, collaboration with the middle-class Radicals did not develop, and the only

object actively pursued was the promotion of the candidatures of working men.

Within this limited field, however, the League did not confine itself to parliamentary contests. The possibility of fighting municipal elections was still limited by the continued existence of a property qualification for town councillors—which was not abolished until 1878. But in 1870 the establishment of local School Boards under the Elementary Education Act provided an opportunity for testing the strength of the working-class vote in local elections. In London the L.R.L. was mainly responsible for establishing the Working Men's School Board Central Committee, which put forward nearly a score of candidates, nine of them actually going to the poll. Only one, Benjamin Lucraft, won a seat, in Finsbury ; but the effect of the contests was to stimulate local working-class activity, and to prepare the way for municipal Labour action at a later stage. Outside London, and especially in the mining areas, there was much energy put into the campaign to secure the largest possible registration of working-class voters for both parliamentary and local government elections. A great struggle took place, above all on the North-East Coast, over the right of householders living in rent-free cottages owned by their employers, or of others whose rents included local rates payable by the landlord, to be included in the lists of voters. In Durham and Northumberland a Miners' Franchise Union, formed in 1872, concerned itself especially with this question, and did much to procure the election of Thomas Burt as M.P. for Morpeth in 1874.

The objects of the Labour Representation League, as set forth in its original prospectus, included, as we have seen, other things besides the registration of working-class voters and the election of representatives to Parliament and other public bodies. The League was intended to serve also as a general watchdog on behalf of the workers, to take action in connection with proposals for labour and industrial legislation, to arrange deputations to Ministers and Members of Parliament, and in general to serve as the 'Parliamentary Committee' of the working-class movement. But, whatever use Allan, Applegarth, and their friends may have meant to make

of the L.R.L. for these purposes at the time of its inception, they must speedily have changed their minds ; for to an increasing extent, from 1869 onwards, these functions were taken over by the Trades Union Congress through its own Parliamentary Committee. It seems as if the leaders of the Junta, having been forced against their will to collaborate with Potter and Latham in the L.R.L., decided before long to push that body into the background, and to elevate in its place an organization based entirely on the Trade Union movement.

We have seen that, at the outset, the leaders of the Amalgamated Societies, for fear of compromising their case for legal recognition by the State, held aloof from the Trades Union Conferences promoted primarily by the Northern Unions, but that, in 1868, George Howell was allowed to hold forth on their behalf an olive branch of sorts at the Manchester Congress. In the following year, the Trades Union Congress held at Birmingham decided to appoint a ' Parliamentary Committee ', with much the same objects, except that of contesting elections, as had been accepted by the draftsmen of the constitution of the Labour Representation League. The question therefore arose whether these functions—watching parliamentary proceedings affecting the workers, sending deputations to Ministers, and lobbying M.P.s—were to be undertaken by the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress or by the L.R.L. The question was not settled at once : indeed, for the moment, while legislation arising out of the work of the Royal Commission on Trade Unions was still pending, the ' Junta ' was not at all disposed to hand over these duties to either claimant. It preferred to keep control in its own hands, using as its instrument the Conference of Amalgamated Trades which it had set up in 1867. This caused Allan and Applegarth to go slow with the L.R.L., as far as this part of its declared objects was concerned. But they could not go slow with the Trades Union Congress, which was not under their control. Accordingly, the Parliamentary Committee of the Congress began, from its first appointment at Birmingham in 1869, to take over this part of the work which the L.R.L. had nominally set out to do—with the consequence that the L.R.L. became merely an

organization for promoting working-class candidatures, and lost a considerable part of its power to appeal to the Trade Unions for support.

While the L.R.L. was still in process of being formed, there occurred, in 1869, two by-elections in which the opportunity arose for a test of working-class strength. These were at Stafford and at Nottingham, the one a small borough, in which there existed a strong Radical Association, and the other a traditional Radical stronghold, which had provided Feargus O'Connor with the only seat ever won by a Chartist candidate. At Stafford, the Radical Association put forward George Odger as the workmen's candidate. A Whig ' Liberal ' was also in the field ; and it was decided to take a trial ballot of the ' Liberal ' electors. Odger was beaten in this, and withdrew, as he did again at Bristol in the following year. At Nottingham, George Potter was nominated by the local Working Men's Political Union, with the support of a number of middle-class Radical M.P.s. But here again there was a rival Whig ' Liberal ' ; and Potter was persuaded to retire, in order to avoid splitting the ' progressive ' vote.

The League's next opportunity occurred in Southwark early in 1870. Southwark was a constituency in which there was a large working-class electorate, including a considerable number of Irish labourers. The Whigs put forward Sir Sydney Waterlow, and attempts to persuade him to withdraw in Odger's favour were unavailing. Many leading middle-class Radicals intervened in the contest on Odger's side, and it was in connection with this contest that John Stuart Mill, urged thereto by his Socialist step-daughter, Helen Taylor, wrote his famous letter to Odger urging that working-class candidates should go to the poll, even at the cost of letting Tories capture seats, until the Whigs were induced " to compromise and allow a few working-men representatives in the House ".

At Southwark in 1870, the Tory did capture the seat ; but Odger finished well ahead of the Whig, who retired at the eleventh hour, when it was too late for his withdrawal to bring about Odger's election. This contest was the first in which the Labour Representation League definitely chal-

lenged the Whigs, to the extent of allowing the Tories to capture an essentially 'Liberal' seat; and it was doubtless not without its effect in preventing Whig opposition to Macdonald and Burt at the General Election of 1874. Odger's poll of 4,382, as against 4,686 for the successful Tory and 2,966 for the unsuccessful Whig, was a portent of which nascent Liberalism was compelled to take notice.

But the Labour Representation League was still in two minds about pushing its claims to an issue, at the cost of enabling the Tories to capture seats. After the triumphant return of the Whig-Liberals in the General Election of 1868 it was still looking to the Gladstone Government to pass legislation securing the legal status of Trade Unionism; and opposition to Whig candidates at by-elections seemed as if it might imperil this vindication of Trade Union rights. Accordingly, when a vacancy occurred at Norwich in 1871, though George Howell was put forward as a working-class candidate, he was withdrawn as soon as it became plain that the Whig nominee was determined to fight the seat.

In this year, the promised Trade Union legislation was at last brought forward, and the Unions found out how far the Gladstone Government was prepared to meet their demands. The Trade Union Bill, in its original form, gave with one hand and took away with the other. It granted to the Trade Unions a fuller legal recognition than their leaders had expected, providing what seemed, until the Taff Vale decision upset the apple-cart thirty years later, to be full protection for Trade Union funds and an assured status for Trade Unionism itself. But coupled with these liberal concessions was a series of clauses directed against what the Gladstone Government regarded as misuse of Trade Union powers. Molestation, obstruction, and intimidation were so widely defined as offences punishable under the criminal law as to expose any body of men who struck work, or even threatened to strike, to serious danger of imprisonment. Moreover, the right of peaceful picketing, which had been expressly conceded by the Molestation of Workmen Act in 1859, was to be taken away; and all action against blacklegs and non-unionists was clearly meant to be excluded.

In effect, the Government had taken Applegarth and Allan, and the other Trade Union leaders whom they had marshalled to given evidence as to the innocuousness of their societies, strictly at their word. It had given the fullest legalization to Trade Unions as friendly societies providing benefits for their members, and as peaceful bodies for collective bargaining with employers who were prepared to bargain peacefully. But it had left no room for the Trade Unions as fighting bodies, and it threatened to leave them helpless against any employer who was not prepared to meet them half-way.

The Trade Unions were immediately up in arms against this part of the proposed legislation. Even the most peaceable Trade Union leaders, who were most eager to replace strike action by conciliation and arbitration, saw the need to fight against such restrictions ; for in the absence of any power to compel employers to resort to arbitration it was essential, even in their eyes, to retain the strike as a weapon of last restort. Moreover, the moderate leaders of the craft Unions were the keenest advocates of a policy of excluding non-unionists, in order to maintain a craft monopoly of labour ; and the Bill struck directly at this part of their traditional policy.

Hitherto, Allan and Applegarth had been intent above all else on keeping the control of Trade Union dealings with the Government in their own hands, and on excluding the Northern leaders, who would not present the case in so favourable a light according to the notions of Gladstone and his Cabinet. But the Bill of 1871 made it plain that their tactics had failed, and that it was imperative to mobilize the entire force of the movement against the threat to its power. Immediately, having failed to persuade the Government to modify the terms of the Bill, the London leaders directed their energies to securing its division into two separate measures ; for they did not want, in opposing the criminal clauses, to lose the valuable concessions made in the part of the Bill which dealt with the civil status of the Unions. This division into two Bills they finally secured ; but the next thing to be done was to rouse the Trade Unions throughout the country against what had now become the Criminal Law Amendment Bill.

This need was responsible for important changes in the

organization of the movement. Allan and Applegarth had hitherto not taken much notice of the Trades Union Congress, though they had ceased to be actively hostile to it, as they had been in 1867. But now it seemed plain that the Congress was the appropriate body to act as the instrument of the entire movement in the coming struggle. Accordingly, they dissolved the separate Conference of Amalgamated Trades which they had founded in 1867, and from this point entered wholeheartedly into the work of the Trades Union Congress. The Parliamentary Committee of the Congress, fully organized for the first time in 1871, became the directing agency in the Trade Union campaign ; and from this time it took over completely the functions of watching current legislation, sending deputations to Ministers, and acting as the parliamentary watchdog of Labour—functions which, two years earlier, it had been proposed to confer on the Labour Representation League.

The Trade Unions were not able to prevent the enactment of the new penal law. The Trade Union Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act were both passed in 1871 ; and within a year an outstanding example had been given of the danger to which the movement was exposed. In 1872 there was a strike of the Beckton gas-stokers in London, involving breach of contract by the strikers. In addition to convictions under the Master and Servant Act for this offence, the Courts sentenced the strike leaders savagely to a year's imprisonment for the crime of conspiring to molest the company. There were also other cases, especially among the coal-miners, of severe sentences upon Trade Union leaders. For four years after 1871 the Trade Unions were engaged in a nation-wide campaign to secure the repeal of the obnoxious Criminal Law Amendment Act, and also a further amendment of the law relating to masters and servants.

There were other respects, too, in which 1871 was a momentous year for the Labour movement. It was the year of the Paris Commune, and of the bloody massacre in Paris which followed the Commune's defeat. The International Working Men's Association, though it had not been mainly responsible for the revolutionary uprising in Paris, rallied to

the defence of the Communards, and Karl Marx published in its name his famous manifesto on ' The Civil War in France '. For some time before this, the British Trade Union leaders who had figured so prominently—on paper—on the General Council of the I.W.M.A. had been dropping off, either from dislike of Marx's revolutionary outlook or merely because they had other fish to fry. But the affair of the Commune, plainly identifying the International with the cause of revolution, was too much for most of those who remained. Only a small left wing, led by John Hales, stood by the International after 1871, to form a British Federal Council which neither gained any widespread influence nor remained long in being. In effect, the International itself ceased to count in 1872, when its headquarters were transferred, on Marx's motion, to the United States, and the British contingent, which had hitherto sat on its General Council, became merely a national group. Dissensions over the Commune and, together with them, the bitter struggle between Marx and Bakunin, between Communist and Anarchist, for control of working-class policy, slew the International; and the removal of its secretariat to America, where it languished for a time and then died, was the end of its European influence.

The British leaders, however, were not much concerned with Marx's International. They were thinking chiefly about home affairs. In 1871, besides the Trade Union Bill, Parliament was busy with a political measure of great importance to their fortunes. We have seen with what difficulty the few working-class candidates of 1868 had been financed; and, both then and later, Labour men who withdrew " in order to avoid splitting the progressive vote " were often influenced also by the doubt whether they would be able on polling day to find the money for the fees of the Returning Officer. It was a part of the working-class programme that the costs of elections ought, in order to avoid penalizing poor men, to be met out of public funds; and payment of M.P.s was also a plank in the traditional platform of working-class Radicalism.

In 1871 the Gladstone Government put forward an Election Bill including a clause which provided for the payment of official election expenses out of the rates. In order to avoid a

multiplication of ' freak ' candidates, the clause also laid down that each candidate should make a deposit of £100 on his nomination, this sum to be forfeited if he failed to poll a certain proportion of the votes. The working-class Radicals welcomed the main proposal, but were strongly opposed to the deposit, which they held would penalize poor as against wealthy candidates. The Labour Representation League took up the case, and presented a memorial on the subject to W. E. Forster, the Minister in charge of the Bill. But, in the event, the whole clause was dropped. Gladstone refused to put on the party whips in its support, and, though 162 Whigs and Liberals voted for it, 65 voted against, and 162 abstained.

There was great indignation in working-class quarters against the Liberals who had helped to bring about the defeat of the clause. The L.R.L., in an address to the working-men electors, bitterly criticized those Liberals who had voted against it on the plea of the need for keeping down the rates. The cost, it was pointed out, would not exceed one penny per elector ; yet, of the 65 who had voted against the clause, 45 were borough Members, " owing their seats in the main to artisan electors ".

For the rest, political attention in 1871 was centred upon Robert Lowe's abortive attempt to tax matches in order to finance the army increases which followed the Franco-Prussian War ; upon Henry Bruce's first Licensing Bill, which turned the brewers and publicans into electioneering agents for the Conservative Party, but had to be withdrawn because the temperance interests would not support a measure that failed to provide for Local Veto ; and upon the exciting question of the dowry to be conferred upon Princess Louise on the occasion of her marriage to the Duke of Argyll.

This last question was of little importance in itself ; but it served to bring to a head the strong Republican feeling that had been developing in the country on account of Queen Victoria's unpopularity. This unpopularity had its source largely in the Queen's almost complete withdrawal from the public eye ever since the Prince Consort's death in 1861 ; and it had been reinforced by the fall of Napoleon III's Empire and the establishment of a Republic in France. It was

argued that the Crown was rendering no service in return for the large sums expended on it ; and in particular, in the case of Princess Louise, who was marrying a subject and not making a dynastic alliance, Radicals urged that there was no case at all for providing a dowry at the public expense.

The dispute is important enough to be recorded here only because it was the occasion of one among many quarrels between the Radical Republicans and the leaders of the ' new model ' Trade Unions. While Charles Bradlaugh and his followers were fulminating against the proposed dowry, Robert Applegarth was persuading the Labour Representation League to pass a resolution condemning the offensive references made to the Royal Family by a certain working-class spokesman as an attempt to divert the minds of the people from more important issues, and positively defending the dowry proposal as one " which, in its liberal and exceptional character, commends itself to the hearty approval of the nation ". The carrying of this resolution was a clear sign of the completeness with which, by 1871, the moderates had established their ascendancy inside the L.R.L.

Indeed, the most influential opponent of the ' Junta ' had, from 1869, practically ceased to oppose. In that year, Potter's newspaper, the *Bee-Hive*, found itself in difficulties ; and in the reorganization which followed Potter lost his independence. He remained as manager ; but the Unitarian Minister, Henry Solly, the founder of the Working Men's Club and Institute Union, was put over his head as chief editor, and the paper thereafter reflected the Junta's views. Potter himself became steadily more moderate in his opinions : his later years were spent largely in ' Lib.-Lab.' propaganda under the auspices of the National Reform Union.

The rift between Republicans and Trade Unionists was not uninfluenced by strong differences over religion. The Trade Union leaders were in many cases pious Nonconformists, and were in most cases eager to prevent religious issues from being raised inside the Unions, or the Unions themselves from acquiring a reputation for infidelity. On the other hand, Republicanism and Secularism commonly, though not always, walked hand in hand ; and Radical Republicanism of the

school of Bradlaugh preached Atheism and Radicalism as complementary elements in a unified Rationalist creed. This alone was enough to prevent any fusion of forces between Bradlaugh and Holyoake and the Trade Unions, whose leaders were attracted rather to the developing Liberal Party as the political expression of Nonconformity. Moreover, the Secularists of those days were not in the habit of mincing their words. The Trade Unions, seeking to establish the rights of collective bargaining and to ensure their legal status, had no wish to become identified in the public mind with open blasphemers who were continually falling foul of the Blasphemy Laws.

This largely explains the failure of the left wing among Radical politicians to secure the allegiance of the Trade Unions in the years after 1867. Had it not been for this cleavage over religion, many of the conditions needed for the rise of an independent political Labour movement were present in the early 'seventies. For, despite the pacific policy of the established leaders and the dangers inherent in the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the years from 1871 onwards were fuller of strikes than any period since the collapse of the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union in 1834. In 1871 there occurred the great strikes of the engineers and shipbuilders on the north-east coast for the Nine Hours Day—a movement carried through to success under rank and file leadership by the improvised Nine Hours League without the countenance of the big Amalgamated Societies, which doubtless feared the effect on parliamentary opinion of supporting strike action while their claims for legislation were under debate.

In the same year, there was a big strike of the South Wales miners for an advance in wages. In 1872, the year of the London gas-stokers' affair, the London building trades were out for twelve weeks in a victorious struggle for a wage advance; and in the same year Joseph Arch began his extraordinarily successful movement among the agricultural workers, who during the next three years came out on strike in one place after another, and won substantial advances in wages. In 1873 the South Wales miners were out again for

an advance, and in 1874 the Yorkshire miners fought a half-successful struggle against a reduction.

This was the turning-point. By 1875 the great boom of the early 'seventies, which had provided the opportunity for this big forward movement of Trade Unionism, had receded ; and industry was beginning to slide down hill towards the great depression of 1879. The years after 1875 were also full of strikes and lock-outs ; but these were mostly cases of resisting reductions rather than demanding concessions, and in the majority of disputes the workers lost the day. The miners especially became involved in a sequence of disputes which shook Alexander Macdonald's National Miners' Association to its foundations and totally destroyed its rival, the Amalgamated Association of Miners, which had its strongholds in Lancashire and South Wales. The South Wales miners were heavily beaten in 1875, and the Lancashire miners in 1877. In Scotland the Fife miners were beaten in 1877, and the Scottish Unions fell rapidly to pieces. Only in Northumberland and Durham were the miners strong enough to weather the storm without dislocation of their Trade Unions ; and in these areas they were in the end compelled to accept sliding scales, under which wages were reduced automatically as the price of coal fell in the period of generally declining prices which lasted nearly to the end of the century.

Other industries were involved in similar troubles. The London stonemasons were beaten in a big dispute over the building of the new Law Courts in 1877 ; and in the same year the Bolton cotton operatives were compelled to submit to reductions after a struggle lasting for eight weeks. There were still bigger cotton stoppages in Oldham and North Lancashire in the following year, with the same result ; and in 1879 the London and Liverpool engineers and the Tyne shipbuilders were forced to accept reduced wages, though they were successful, except in the case of Liverpool, in securing compromises less unfavourable than the employers' demands.

Thus, the entire decade of the 'seventies was filled with practically continuous industrious conflict, in which the Trade Unions began, during the boom, by winning large advances and adding greatly to their membership, and subsequently

fought vainly against defeat as boom turned to depression and unemployment sapped their strength. During the first of these periods, Trade Unionism showed marked signs of spreading from the skilled workers to the less skilled. In addition to the agricultural labourers and the gas-stokers, Trade Unions sprang into existence among railway workers, seamen, and other groups previously quite unorganized. The Women's Trade Union League, founded in 1874 under the leadership of Emma Paterson, began its campaign of organization among the women workers.

All this ferment of industrial unrest produced, however, little response in the political sphere. In 1872 the Liberal Government passed the Ballot Act ; but the proposal to pay official election expenses out of the rates was dropped ; and there was, of course, no response to the working-class demand for Payment of Members. In the same year the Government carried through its Licensing Act which, though milder than the Bill of 1871, ensured it the enmity of the brewers and publicans whenever a General Election arrived. It also went a long way towards meeting the claims of the miners, by carrying through the Coal and Metalliferous Mines Acts, which greatly improved the general regulations, and strengthened the position of the checkweighmen, in addition to prohibiting the payment of wages in public houses, providing for the certification of colliery managers and for daily inspection of each pit, and allowing the workmen, when they had fears for their safety, to appoint special inspectors of their own. Moreover, in this year a Public Health Act, soon to be amplified and amended by the Tories in 1875, laid the foundations of the modern system of sanitary administration by elected councils in both urban and rural areas.

The Gladstone Government of 1868–73, despite its shortcomings from the standpoint of the Trade Unions, had a remarkable record of achievement in social legislation and political reform. The working classes, even if they had as yet no direct representation in Parliament, were securing the benefits of their partial enfranchisement through the competition of the two great parties for their electoral support. The Tories, in 1867, had extended the Factory Acts to cover all

types of manufacture, and had passed the first important Housing Act. The Whig-Liberals, after their return to power in 1868, had granted the Ballot, made provision for a general system of elementary education, opened the Civil Service fully to competitive examination and abolished the monopoly of the Church of England in the older Universities, passed important Acts dealing with the mines and with public health and local government, and legalized the Trade Unions—albeit they had accompanied this concession with reactionary conditions limiting the right to strike. On the whole, progressive causes had scored heavy gains ; and, but for the hostility of the brewers and publicans and for Gladstone's inability to see the justice of the Trade Union case against the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Liberals might have appealed with confidence to the country for a renewed lease of power.

No one knew how soon a new election would come when, in December, 1872, the Labour Representation League, in pursuance of its policy of promoting working-class candidatures, held a delegate conference at Birmingham, attended by representatives from a number of local bodies. A few middle-class Radical M.P.s, regarded as sympathetic to the working-class cause, were invited to attend the gathering ; but none of them actually put in an appearance. As a sequel to this meeting, at which a number of papers were read and discussed, but nothing very constructive was accomplished, the Labour Representation League sent out, in March, 1873, an address to the working classes calling upon them to establish branches in as many places as possible, with a view to contesting seats at the next General Election ; and it also set up a sub-committee to draw up a list of suitable areas for working-class candidates. At a further delegate conference, held in September, 1873, a tentative list of areas was drawn up, and the League appealed to the working-class organizations in these areas to choose their candidates in consultation with the London Executive, and to get ready for the contest. The Executive itself prepared a list of authorized candidates, eligible to be chosen by the local bodies.

In this year one by-election was fought, not by a candidate

put forward by the L.R.L., but by a person closely associated with the working-class movement. J. Baxter Langley, who gave considerable help to the railway workers in their early attempts at Trade Unionism and was also a prominent figure in the Building Society movement, fought at Greenwich, coming in second out of six candidates. Apart from this, nothing was done, except preparation for the coming General Election, which came sooner than it was expected, when Gladstone suddenly decided to dissolve Parliament in January, 1874.

At the General Election, which followed at once, thirteen working-class or Labour candidates went to the poll, not counting Bradlaugh, who made his second attempt at Northampton. Eleven of the thirteen were well-known Trade Unionists; the twelfth was Potter, formerly a Trade Union leader, though now a journalist, and the thirteenth was Alfred A. Walton, originally a stonemason, and later a builder and architect, who had been on the Council of Bronterre O'Brien's National Reform League in 1849, had been connected with the National Association of United Trades in the 'forties, and was both a leading advocate of co-operative building and a prolific writer on Labour and Trade Union questions. Walton, an old collaborator of George Julian Harney, was the one link between Chartism and the new movement for Labour representation.

Of the Trade Unionists, four were miners. Alexander Macdonald, who had been compelled to withdraw at Kilmarnock, now fought Stafford, as the nominee of the local Working Men's Radical Association. Stafford was a double constituency, and Macdonald's fellow-candidates were two Tories and a Liberal. He came in second, beating one of the Tories, and leaving the Liberal at the bottom of the poll. His election address called for an assimilation of the county to the borough franchise, with re-distribution of seats; for the repeal of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and a further change in the law of master and servant; for improved factory legislation and better enforcement of the existing law; for easier transfer of land, abolition of the game laws, a reduction of tax burdens, a peaceful foreign policy, and a measure of Irish Home Rule. He said nothing about the miners, whose

cause was his chief concern, because there were no mines in the constituency. His address was essentially moderate in tone, and included an appeal for a " more peaceful relation " of the interests of Capital and Labour.

Thomas Burt, the leader of the Northumberland miners, fought Morpeth—which returned only a single Member. Morpeth, unlike Stafford, was a mining seat ; and the miners' vote had been strongly organized by the Miners' Franchise Union, formed in 1872. Burt received the support of Joseph Cowen, the Radical Member for Newcastle ; and no Liberal was put forward against him. He had an easy victory over the Tory, Major Duncan, who polled only 585 votes to his 3,332. Robert Elliot, the miner poet, and the Irish doctors, James and Robert Trotter, who had played a great part in organizing the Miners' Franchise Union, enlivened the contest with a plentiful supply of dialect verses, some of them nominally directed against Burt in order to keep the ball in the air.

These two miners—Macdonald and Burt—were the only successful Labour candidates. They achieved fame as the first Labour M.P.s. The remaining miners who fought were William Pickard, the Lancashire leader, at Wigan, and Thomas Halliday, the leader of the Amalgamated Association of Miners, at Merthyr Tydfil. Pickard had against him two Conservatives and two Liberals for the two seats : the two Tories won and he came in fourth, just ahead of the second Liberal. At Merthyr, there was no Conservative in the field, and Halliday fought against two Liberals, of whom one was Henry Richard, the well-known advocate of pacificism. Halliday was beaten, getting 4,912 votes against 7,606 for Richard and 6,908 for the other Liberal.

Two contests were fought in London. At Southwark, George Odger faced two Liberals and one Tory. He came in third, polling 3,496 votes as against 5,901 for Locke, the leading Liberal, and 5,716 for the Tory. The other Liberal got 3,121. At Finsbury, Benjamin Lucraft, who had won a seat on the School Board three years earlier, fared much worse. With two Liberals and one Tory against him, he was left at the bottom of the poll.

The remaining fights were at Aylesbury, Middlesbrough, Peterborough, Preston, Stoke-on-Trent, Warwick, and High Wycombe—rather a curious selection of seats. At Aylesbury, George Howell polled 1,144, against 1,761 for the Liberal and 1,624 for the Conservative—the only other candidates for the two seats. John Kane, the leader of the ironworkers, came in second in a three-cornered fight at Middlesbrough, polling 1,544 votes, against 3,177 for the victorious Liberal, the well-known ironmaster, Bolchow. George Potter's fight at Peterborough was a more complicated affair, with four Liberals and one Conservative against him for the two seats. He polled 562, coming in fourth. At Preston, a Tory stronghold since Henry Hunt's defeat in 1832, Thomas Mottershead had a straight fight with two Conservatives. He polled 3,606, against 6,362 and 5,211. Walton, at Stoke-on-Trent, confronted two Liberals and a Tory, and was bottom with 5,198 votes, just behind the second Liberal, whose defeat his intervention doubtless caused. Randall Cremer, at Warwick, did badly, against two Tories and one Liberal. He polled only 183 votes, against 836, 783, and 740—a Tory coming in first, and the Liberal getting the second seat. Finally, at Wycombe, Henry Broadhurst secured 113 votes, the single seat going to an aristocratic Liberal, with 980, and the Conservative polling only 19.

Of the thirteen seats contested, ten were in two-member constituencies ; and the contests produced almost every possible variety of candidature. In six cases out of the ten, there were two Liberal candidates in the field against the working-class nominee, and two of the three contests in single constituencies were also against a Liberal. In three of the other four double constituencies, there was only one Liberal in the field, and at Preston there was no Liberal. At Morpeth, Burt, as we have seen, had a straight fight with the Tory for the single seat. Thus in eight out of the thirteen cases, the Labour man was in definite opposition to the Liberals ; but the only two seats won were in constituencies in which this opposition did not arise. Burt and Macdonald both received the bulk of the Liberal vote.

Besides the thirteen who went to the poll, there were other

candidates who had to withdraw, usually for lack of funds. These included William Brown, the Staffordshire miners' leader, at Tamworth, and Maltman Barry, who had been connected with the International and was later to fight Burt as a Tory and to act as a Tory agent in dealing with the Socialists in the 'eighties, at Marylebone.

CHAPTER VI

DECLINE AND FALL

The Last Years of the Labour Representation League. Trade Unionism in Depression

The thirteen candidates of 1874 were the maximum effort of the Labour Representation League. Soon after the General Election, three by-elections at Norwich, Ipswich, and Stoke-on-Trent afforded a further opportunity of putting Labour candidates into the field ; but at Norwich George Howell once more withdrew in order to avoid splitting the progressive vote. Walton again went to the poll at Stoke-on-Trent, against a Conservative and a formidable Independent—the famous Tichborne claimant, Dr. Kenealy. The result was that Kenealy won the seat, with 6,110 votes ; Walton, with 4,168, beat the Tory, who got 3,901. At Ipswich, William Newton, who had not stood at the General Election, was beaten in a straight fight with a Tory, by 2,213 votes to 1,607.

Even before the General Election, the L.R.L. had become virtually a Trade Union body. Latham had been succeeded as President by William Allan and Lloyd Jones as Secretary by Henry Broadhurst, of the Stonemasons. Daniel Guile, Secretary of the Ironfounders, had become Treasurer in succession to Allan. These changes meant a decisive move away from the notion of a 'Labour Party' towards the narrower object of securing the return of a few Trade Unionists to Parliament. At the General Election, the L.R.L. appealed to "the working-class voters of the United Kingdom" to "vote for Labour Candidates, that you may practically assert the principle of direct labour representation". The manifesto went on to urge the electors to disregard parties, and give their votes to people who would give reforms. The reforms which were stressed as particularly needed were complete

religious equality, sound national finance, land reform, and electoral reform.

Towards the end of the following year, 1875, the League issued a further manifesto. This began by defining its programme. It stood for " assimilation of the county to the borough franchise ", " a more equitable distribution of political power in the constituencies ", the development of local self-government, the repeal of entail and primogeniture laws, the abolition of the game laws and the cultivation of waste and preserved lands, revision of the system of taxation, and complete religious equality. There was clearly nothing in such a programme to which the most respectable of middle-class Radicals was likely to object. In fact, it was a very long way to the right of what was being urged by such Radicals as Dilke and Chamberlain, to say nothing of Charles Bradlaugh. It is therefore not surprising to find the manifesto defining the political attitude of the League in the following terms :

> We have ever sought to be allied to the great Liberal Party, to which we, by conviction, belong. If they have not reciprocated this feeling, the fault is theirs, and the cause of disruption is to be found in them, and not in the League. . . . But, happily, this exclusive feeling is fast dying out, as evidenced by the fact that men of the highest standing in the Liberal ranks have both written and spoken in favour of the objects of the League, and many of them have given substantial proofs of their sympathy by contributing towards the expenses of candidates who have gone to the poll.
>
> The seats contested by Labour candidates have been, up to the present, very few, and these, in the majority of instances, were held by the Conservatives. We are sorry to add that in many cases large numbers of the middle-class Liberals preferred voting for the Tories rather than support a working-class candidate. Surely, then, we are the aggrieved party, and it is not fair to charge us with dividing the Liberal interest.

It will be observed that this manifesto differs markedly in tone from that of the previous year, when the League had appealed to the workers to " disregard parties " in voting at the General Election. The explanation is simple. In 1874 the League, as a Trade Union body, was fighting principally in order to secure the repeal of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the improvement of the law of master and servant. The Gladstone Government had refused to concede these

claims, and accordingly the Trade Union leaders wanted the workers to vote against Whig-Liberals who were involved in this refusal, while supporting all Liberals who would agree to back the Trade Union demands. It is not true, as has often been stated, that the Trade Unions threw their weight on the side of the Tories in 1874. They voted for men, not parties—but with a marked preference for voting for a Liberal whenever he could be induced to give even qualified support to their claims. It was not Trade Unionism but the drink trade that overthrew Gladstone's Government at the General Election.

But by November, 1875, when the League issued its further manifesto, the case was altered. Disraeli, determined if he could to get the organized workers on his side, had actually repealed the Criminal Law Amendment Act and replaced it by the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, which, despite its ominous title, went a long way towards meeting the Trade Union claims. The offences of intimidation, molestation, and obstruction were now much more narrowly defined ; the right of peaceful picketing was restored in a modified form ; and the legalization of Trade Unions enacted in 1871 was thus retained without the obnoxious conditions which had been attached to it by the Gladstone Government. Nor was this all. The Conservatives had passed the Employers and Workmen Act, which went nearly the whole way to meet the Trade Union demand for equality of workmen before the law. Ordinary breach of contract, by workmen as well as by masters, was now a purely civil affair, which could give rise to an action for damages, but not to either imprisonment or fine. As against this, aggravated breach of contract, involving danger to life or valuable property or the interruption of the gas or water services, still remained a criminal offence, a clause to this effect being inserted in the new Conspiracy Act. But the Trade Union leaders deemed the exception small in comparison with what they had gained. To all intents and purposes the struggle over the Labour Laws had been brought to a triumphant issue. There remained certain technical points, which were cleared up by the Trade Union Amendment Act of 1876. But these were not controversial.

This explains the absence of any reference, in the 1875

manifesto, to the question of the Labour Laws, which had been the principal preoccupation of Trade Unionism ever since the Trade Union Conference of 1864. The Trade Unions had won, all along the line.

But this victory, so far from making the Trade Union leaders grateful to the Tories, who had given them what Gladstone had refused, removed the only serious difference which had separated Allan and his friends from the Liberal Party. They were now free to join forces with their natural allies under the aegis of a Liberalism which stood for the equality of Churchmen and Nonconformists, for the development of public education on non-sectarian lines, and, in due time, for an extension of the county franchise in the hope of breaking the political power of the Tory landlords. Disraeli earned no gratitude from the Trade Union leaders : his yielding to their demands precipitated them headlong into the Liberal camp.

It did not matter that the Conservatives had also passed the Merchant Shipping Act of 1875, and thus met the demands of Samuel Plimsoll for the ' Plimsoll Line ' and the condemnation of ' coffin ships ' and of the enrolment of seamen under grossly unfair conditions. Shipowners, being largely Free Trade Liberals, were as fair game for a Conservative Government as the owners of grouse-moors and deer-forests were for the middle-class Liberals. It did not matter that the Conservatives had passed a Public Health Act and a Housing Act which went considerably further in the direction of local government reform than the Liberals had gone. Nothing mattered very much, now that the Labour Laws had been put right, except that the Trade Union leaders should be able to return to the political Nonconformist fold.

If the trade boom had lasted, this return might have been made impossible by the industrial militancy of their followers. But, as we have seen, in the years after 1874 one Trade Union after another was going down to defeat, whenever an attempt was made to resist the heavy wage-reductions that were being enforced. Employers in many industries, now that Trade Unionism had received the official recognition of the law, were much more disposed than they had been to accept the Unions as bargaining agencies, especially when the Union leaders

were ready to enter into agreements for conciliation and arbitration, so that the requisite wage-reductions could be tidily arranged without the inconvenience of strikes or lock-outs. If the Trade Unions would 'behave', most employers were no longer disposed to break them, but preferred dealing with them instead; and Trade Union leaders, realizing the inevitability of defeat if strikes were called during the depression, were very ready to come to terms.

Thus, after 1874, the period of 'Lib.-Lab.'-ism almost instantly ensued, and its industrial concomitant was a regime of sliding scales, conciliation boards, arbitration, and Trade Union moderation. The new Unions of the less skilled workers faded away into insignificance, where they did not vanish altogether. Only the craft Unions, with their friendly benefits to hold them together, could ride out the storm; and even they lay for a long time dismasted and nearly helpless in the ensuing calm.

Under these conditions, the Labour Representation League merely withered away. It survived, on paper, to secure in 1880 the election of Henry Broadhurst, its Secretary, for Stoke-on-Trent. Broadhurst ran this time, not as a 'third-party' candidate, as he had done in 1874 at High Wycombe, but as the colleague of a Liberal manufacturer, William Woodall, against Kenealy and a Tory, Robert Heath. He and Woodall were returned by an enormous majority. But elsewhere the 'Labour' candidates met with no fresh successes. Burt, at Morpeth, was returned unopposed; and at Stafford Alexander Macdonald held his seat. But that was all. Benjamin Lucraft unsuccessfully fought Tower Hamlets, polling 5,572; but George Shipton, who had run at Southwark against both a Liberal and a Tory at a by-election earlier in the same year, did not try again. He had polled only 799. Finally, Joseph Arch fought Wilton, as a Liberal, polling 397 votes against his Conservative opponent's 819.

In the following year, Macdonald died, and George Howell fought the seat against Salt, the Tory ex-member who had been beaten the year before. Salt won this time, with 1,482 votes to Howell's 1,185.

After that the Labour Representation League ceased to

exist, even on paper. Broadhurst had become Secretary of the Trades Union Congress in 1875, and had transferred his main attentions to that body. The impetus given to the cause of Labour representation by the extension of the franchise in 1867 had died away. It needed a new Reform Act to stimulate the Trade Unions to take up the question again. Before, however, such a situation arose, conditions had changed, because Socialism, wholly submerged in Great Britain since the removal of the International, had again become vocal and organized. To the beginnings of this Socialist movement and to the revived Radicalism which was its leading rival we must now turn our attention.

CHAPTER VII

THE NEW RADICALISM AND THE RISE OF SOCIALISM

Bradlaugh, Dilke, and Chamberlain—The Social Democratic Federation—The Socialist League—The Socialists and the Unemployed

WHILE the Trade Union leaders, their demands for improved Labour Laws satisfied, were identifying themselves more and more completely with the Liberal Party, a new Radicalism was developing quite apart from the Labour movement. One section of this Radicalism, the more extreme, was identified with Secularism as well as Republicanism, and had Charles Bradlaugh as its recognized national leader. Bradlaugh, born in 1833, had been first a lawyer's clerk and then a soldier ; but in 1853 he purchased his discharge from the army, and devoted himself to the causes of Secularism and Radical politics. As ' Iconoclast ', he won a great reputation as a speaker and writer ; and from 1860 he edited *The National Reformer* as the leading organ of the Radical-Secularist cause. He fought Northampton unsuccessfully as a Radical in 1868 and 1874 ; and in the latter year Annie Besant joined with him in an alliance which lasted for eleven years. They fought together a great battle against the Blasphemy Laws and the laws directed against ' indecent ' publications advocating birth control ; and under their leadership the National Secular Society became a rallying-point for the more extreme Radicals and Republicans all over the country.

In 1880 Bradlaugh was elected as M.P. for Northampton ; and there ensued the six years' struggle with the House of Commons over the right of an ' unbeliever ' to sit in Parliament. Bradlaugh was refused the right to affirm, instead of taking the oath, and then refused the right to take an oath which it was held could not be binding upon him. In 1882

he administered the oath to himself, but was still excluded by the House, which maintained its attitude, despite his repeated re-election by his constituents at Northampton, until January, 1886, when he was at last allowed to affirm and to take his seat unmolested. He died in 1891, after spending his latter years in a bitter controversy with the Socialists, to whom his strongly individualist Radicalism made him an inveterate opponent. In the 'eighties, great battles went on in the Secularist movement between the Socialists and the followers of Bradlaugh. But, until the re-birth of British Socialism in that decade, Bradlaugh was the real leader of the extreme left in politics.

The other section of the new Radicalism was also Republican, but it was not led by 'infidels' and 'blasphemers'. Its protagonists were Joseph Chamberlain and Charles Dilke. Dilke, as M.P. for Chelsea from 1868 to 1886, was the leader of a London Radicalism much more extreme than that of the Labour Representation League, albeit much more imperialistic in matters of foreign policy. Joseph Chamberlain came later upon the political field ; but in the 'seventies and early 'eighties he and Dilke together were the chief representatives of a new Radicalism which set out to capture the Liberal Party for a social programme a long way in advance of anything advocated by the Trade Unions of the time.

Chamberlain, born in 1836, had by 1874 made his fortune in business as a member of the screw-making firm of Nettlefolds. In that year he retired from business, and stood unsuccessfully for Sheffield as an extreme Radical. Some years earlier he had begun to take an active part in politics. In 1869 he had been elected to the Birmingham Town Council, and had also become Chairman of the National Education League, the champion of Nonconformist claims against the pretensions of the Church of England to control public education. He had been elected to the first Birmingham School Board in 1870, and in 1873 had become both Chairman of the School Board and Mayor of Birmingham, at the head of Radical majorities on both bodies. These victories were the work of the Birmingham Liberal Association, which had been reorganized on a wide democratic basis in 1868, on the

model of the old Birmingham Political Union of Reform Bill and Chartist days.

As Mayor of Birmingham, Chamberlain proceeded to carry through an advanced programme of municipal reform. He municipalized the supply of gas and water, set to work to clear slums, and made the town a model of sanitary administration. He remained in office as Mayor until 1876, and in 1875 convened at Birmingham a Municipal Sanitary Conference which gave a great impetus to what was later known as ' Municipal Socialism '. In 1876, at a by-election, he was returned unopposed as one of the M.P.s for Birmingham ; and in the following year, with Schnadhorst as his lieutenant, he played the leading part in organizing the National Liberal Federation, which was designed to cover the country with democratic Liberal Associations under Radical leadership, and to destroy once and for all the authority of the Whig oligarchies in the constituencies. Gladstone was induced to bless the new move, which provided the organization responsible for the Liberal election victory of 1880.

In that year, Radical strength was such that Gladstone was compelled to admit one of the Radical leaders to his Cabinet. Chamberlain became President of the Board of Trade, and Dilke was also in the Government, first as Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office and then, from 1882, as President of the Local Government Board. Dilke and Chamberlain were mainly responsible for such advanced legislation as was passed by the Government between 1880 and 1885, including the two Reform Acts of 1884 and 1885, which first assimilated the county to the borough franchise, and then redistributed seats more or less in accordance with population, so as to give increased representation to the growing industrial towns.

But, Radical as Chamberlain and Dilke were in home affairs, they were both strong imperialists ; and the Irish question dominated politics to an increasing extent. Parnell had become leader of the Irish Party in Parliament on Butt's retirement in 1878 ; and in 1879 Michael Davitt, recently released from a long imprisonment for treason, had organized the Irish Land League with Parnell's support. Chamberlain, prepared for a large measure of Irish self-government in local

affairs, boggled at Home Rule as subversive of imperial unity; and in 1885 he and Dilke resigned from the Gladstone Government, principally on the Home Rule issue. This resignation set him free to proclaim his democratic Radicalism more loudly than ever. In the 'Unauthorized Programme' of 1885, and in the speeches made in its support, Chamberlain advanced a really remarkable Radical policy. The rich, having appropriated to themselves the heritage of the poor in the common property of the nation, could justifiably be called upon to pay 'ransom' for the continued enjoyment of their possessions. They should be compelled to pay this 'ransom' by providing, by way of increased taxation, free education, better working-class housing, improved social services, and the like. Farmers should be given security of tenure, fair rent courts should be established, the municipalities should be given full power to acquire land for public purposes, the Church should be disestablished, plural voting should be abolished and M.P.s paid for their services, and opportunity should be given for the agricultural worker—or the townsman if he wanted them—to become the possessor of "three acres and a cow".

Moreover, the unauthorized programme of 1885, without echoing the out-and-out Republicanism of Chamberlain's earlier utterances, made it perfectly clear that the continuance of the monarchy was to be tolerated only on condition that the monarch made no attempt to govern, or to interfere in any way with the working of the democratic institutions of the country. Nor did it repudiate Socialism, which had then recently raised its head again under the auspices of the Social Democratic Federation. It announced that Socialism was to be regarded as "not a stigma, but a modern tendency, pressing for recognition", and asserted that "the path of legislative progress in England had been for years, and must continue to be, distinctly Socialistic".

Of course, this did not mean that Chamberlain was a Socialist, in any real sense of the term. By 'Socialism' he meant mainly three things—'gas and water socialism' in the municipalities, through the extension of local government enterprise, the development of social reforms and social ser-

vices, and the financing of these reforms by taxation bearing heavily upon the rich, and levied as the ' ransom ' payable on account for their usurpation of the people's rights to the land and property of the country. Chamberlain's programme was that of an advanced Radicalism with certain marked collectivist tendencies ; but his collectivism did not extend at all to the nationalization of any of the major means of production. His favoured land reform was peasant proprietorship, and he believed firmly in the type of private enterprise by which his own fortune had been made.

This amount of collectivism was, however, quite enough to involve a sharp clash between the Chamberlainites and other extreme Radicals whose political doctrine was that of nearly complete individualism and of intense hostility to the extension of Government authority over the lives of the citizens. Of this stamp was Auberon Herbert, son of the Earl of Carnarvon, who sat in Parliament as Liberal Member for Nottingham from 1870 to 1874, and devoted himself thereafter to organizing in the Personal Rights Association the advocates of extreme individualism ; and to the same school belonged many of the outstanding leaders of Secularism. Radicals of this type were also strongly opposed to the policy of Dilke and Chamberlain in foreign affairs, standing mostly for various brands of pacifist internationalism or ' Little Englandism ' as against the imperialist and expansionist notions which were soon to carry Chamberlain, though not Dilke, into the Conservative camp.

The appearance of Chamberlain's ' Unauthorized Programme ' was, of course, the sequel to the reform of Parliament which took place, largely under his influence, in 1884 and 1885. The Reform Act of 1884 was primarily a measure for applying a more democratic franchise in the county areas. It considerably more than doubled the county electorate, raising it in England and Wales from 967,000 in 1883 to 2,538,000 in 1886—over which period the borough electorate rose only from 1,652,000 to 1,842,000. Including Scotland, but not Ireland, the total electorate was raised from rather under three millions to nearly five millions by the Reform Act of 1884. After the extension of the franchise, roughly

one in six of the total population of Great Britain had the right to vote.

In the following year Parliament passed the Redistribution Act, reorganizing the constituencies to fit in with the changes in the electorate. Seventy-nine small boroughs which had survived previous Reform Acts were merged in the county areas : thirty-six others, with populations under 50,000, were reduced from two Members to one. Moreover, the counties, instead of remaining as units, were chopped up into county divisions, each returning a single Member ; and the same course was followed with the largest cities, though the two-Member constituency was retained in towns of a size to return two M.P.s, but not more.

These changes were of far-reaching effect. In Ireland the extension of the franchise, without any reduction in the total number of Irish seats despite the change in relative population, made Parnell a present of most of the constituencies outside Ulster, and created a new Nationalist Party working in close alliance with the Irish Land League. In Great Britain, the sweeping reduction in the number of double constituencies acted as a powerful force making for party unification, especially on the Liberal side. For, whereas it had been common up to 1884 for one Whig and one Radical to run in half-alliance for a double constituency, this was no longer possible except in a limited number of towns. The consequence was that Whigs and Radicals alike tended to disappear, and to merge themselves in the unified organization of the Liberal Party. When Labour candidates presented themselves, demanding Liberal support, these double constituencies offered the best opportunity ; and the reduction in their number was therefore to some extent a force making against the growth of 'Lib.-Lab.' representation. But this handicap was much more than offset by the extension of the franchise in the counties, as this, in view of the breaking up of the counties into single constituencies, made the 'Lib.-Labs.' an immediate present of a number of mining seats.

It seemed most convenient to carry on the story of parliamentary Radicalism as far as 1885 ; and the record can be rounded off by carrying it on a little further, to its untimely

end. In 1885 Charles Dilke became involved in a divorce case which, though the fault was hardly his, ended his career as a Liberal statesman. In 1886 he withdrew from Parliament, with the declared intention of retiring permanently. He actually came back in 1892, but he never again held office. Chamberlain entered the new Gladstone Cabinet as President of the Local Government Board ; but in March 1886 he again resigned, refusing to accept Gladstone's Home Rule proposals. In the following year there was an attempt at reconciliation ; but it failed. Chamberlain and his followers seceded from the Gladstonians, and formed the Liberal Unionist Party. In 1895 Chamberlain reappeared in office as Colonial Secretary in Lord Salisbury's Conservative Government. The great Chamberlain-Dilke Radical movement broke to pieces on the rock of the Irish question.

We must now retrace our steps in order to study the growth in Great Britain of a Socialist movement, aiming not merely at Chamberlain's ' socialistic ' reforms, but at a total change in the economic basis of society. Through most of the 'seventies, the only definitely Socialist organizations in Great Britain were the little clubs and societies in London consisting mainly of foreign refugees, including workmen who had settled down to work at their trades in the country of their adoption. These foreign workers had provided the main basis for the London activities of the International Working Men's Association in the 'sixties, and their groups had survived its collapse. The attempt of John Hales, Tyler, and Dr. G. B. Clark to carry on the British Section of the International after 1872 soon came to an end ; and William Harrison Riley's *International Herald*, which sought to keep the spirit of International Socialism alive, finally collapsed by 1875, after Riley had deviated into an attempt to found a ' Mutual Help ' colony on lines of Owenite rather than Marxian Socialism. Riley thereafter moved to Sheffield, where for a few months he issued *The Socialist* ; but he failed to create any effective movement.

Meanwhile, in London, the foreign workers carried on their clubs, with a sprinkling of English adherents. Their chief gathering-place was the Rose Street Club, which was in the

direct line of succession from the German Communist Workers' League of the 1840's. In the 'seventies, this Club was the centre of violent discussions between rival Socialist and Anarchist factions. Johann Most, the German Anarchist printer and journalist, after his arrival in London in 1878, became the leader of the more anarchistic elements, editing *Freiheit* as their organ. About 1880 the more orthodox Social Democrats seceded, and founded a rival club at 49 Tottenham Street. Members of both these bodies formed a quite important element in the new Socialist movement which grew up in London in the early 'eighties. Some of them, such as Johann Georg Eccarius, the German tailor who had been one of Marx's principal links with the British Trade Union leaders, and Adam Weiler, the cabinet-maker who repeatedly moved a resolution for the legal Eight Hours Day at the Trades Union Congress, played an important and active part in the British Trade Union movement.

The most interesting attempt in the 'seventies to create a Socialist movement in Great Britain came, however, not from workmen, British or foreign, but from a group of clergymen of the Church of England, headed by Stewart Headlam, an enterprising London curate, who was later an active Fabian and prominent on the London School Board. Headlam was appalled by the apathy of the Church in face of the strong hold of Secularism and Atheism on the working class ; and he began attending the meetings of Bradlaugh and other leading Secularists, and there stating the case for a Socialist interpretation of Christianity. Headlam took a strong stand on Bradlaugh's side in his struggle against the Blasphemy Laws ; and he gathered round himself a body of clergy and laymen who were prepared to face great risks in their endeavour to create a Christian Socialist movement. In 1877 Headlam organized the Guild of St. Matthew as the exponent of these views ; and Christian Socialism continued to play a quite notable part in the development of Socialist ideas during the ensuing decade.

Pride of place among pioneering Socialist bodies is, however, usually assigned to the Democratic Federation, which Henry Mayers Hyndman was chiefly instrumental in founding in

1881. Strictly speaking, this claim can hardly be substantiated, even if the activities of the Christian Socialists are disregarded. For the Democratic Federation was at the outset a Radical rather than a Socialist body, and did not adopt a fully Socialist programme until 1883. Nearly two years before this, the propagandist activities of the Stratford Radical Club—the most advanced of the working men's clubs in East London—had resulted in the foundation of the Labour Emancipation League, in which Joseph Lane was the leading figure. The L.E.L., which arose out of a series of open-air meetings held in 1881 on Mile End Waste, had as its object "the establishment of a free social condition of society, based on the principle of political equality, with equal social rights for all". Its programme included, besides a Citizen Army and universal free secular education, the public ownership of the land and the means of producing wealth. Later, in 1883, the L.E.L. became affiliated to the Democratic Federation, at the time when the latter body adopted a definitely Socialist programme —seceding later with William Morris and identifying itself with the rival Socialist League. It can, however, fairly be claimed that the Labour Emancipation League, which was essentially a working-class body, was the real pioneer of proletarian Socialism in the 'eighties.

The Democratic Federation—it did not adopt the name Social Democratic Federation until 1884—began as an attempt to unite the Radical clubs and groups of London on a basis of opposition to the Liberal Government, primarily in connection with questions of foreign policy and coercion in Ireland. It was first projected at a meeting held in London on March 12th, 1881, under the chairmanship of Joseph Cowen, the Radical M.P. for Newcastle-on-Tyne, who had befriended many Radical and Labour causes. At this meeting, a committee was appointed to draft a provisional scheme. Thereafter, Cowen drops out of the picture, and Hyndman, already well known as a journalist and writer on foreign policy, takes his place. In the previous year, Hyndman had proposed to stand for Marylebone as an Independent Liberal, on a by no means advanced programme, which included opposition to Irish Home Rule. But in the interval his views had under-

gone a marked change, chiefly, it appears, on account of a reading of the French version of Marx's *Capital*, of which no English translation had yet appeared.

Hyndman was converted to Socialism by his reading of Marx, and proceeded to make a popular version of Marx's doctrines for English consumption in his book, *England for All*, which he distributed at the inaugural conference of the Democratic Federation. Out of this arose an unfortunate misunderstanding. Hyndman, while expressing his debt to a " great German thinker ", whose works would doubtless be made available later to English readers, omitted to mention Marx's name, and thus gave great offence to the veteran Socialist, who was then living in Hampstead, ill and not far from his end. Hyndman had got to know Marx personally, and had discussed with him the proposal to found the Democratic Federation, during the months which preceded its inauguration. But the failure to mention Marx by name was never forgiven, either by Marx himself or by Engels, who remained to the end implacably hostile to Hyndman and to the S.D.F.

In June 1881 the Democratic Federation was launched at a meeting over which Hyndman presided. Its first actions were taken in close connection with Michael Davitt's Irish Land League. Davitt, unlike Parnell and most of the Irish leaders, was by conviction a Socialist, and advocated public ownership of the land ; and there were from the outset close connections between the Irish Land League and the British Socialists. The Democratic Federation's first public action was to send a mission of inquiry to Ireland to study the Irish land question on the spot ; and the report of this mission was its first important publication. Later in the year it issued, in connection with a by-election in Tyrone, a manifesto against the Gladstonian candidate, fiercely attacking Gladstone himself for his policy of coercion in Ireland.

This manifesto was fatal to the original idea of uniting the London Radical Clubs behind the Federation. The attack on Gladstone was too much for many of those who had taken part in the inaugural conference ; and there were numerous secessions. The position of the Federation was further

affected early in 1882 by the Phœnix Park murders, which caused a tremendous outcry in England against the Irish. The Federation, at the cost of further secessions, continued to uphold the Irish cause, and to denounce the coercive policy which had led to the murders, rather than the murders themselves. At the same time it was conducting vigorous propaganda for land nationalization, in which it was joined by the Land Nationalization Society, also founded in 1881.

These events had reduced the Democratic Federation from a general movement of London Radicalism to a small body supported mainly by individual Socialists, with the adherence of only a very few of the London Radical clubs. This narrowing was doubtless the reason why its conference, in May, 1882, adopted an advanced declaration of " opposition to the landlord and capitalist parties who at present control the machinery of the State ", called on " those whose labour makes the wealth of these islands " to " rely on themselves alone ", and announced that " it is the aim of the Democratic Federation to afford the means of organizing the workers of Great Britain and Ireland, so that they may be in a position to secure those interests of the mass of the people which are now persistently sacrificed to the greed and selfishness of the well-to-do ". It was a logical sequel to this declaration when, at its Annual Conference in 1883, the Federation definitely endorsed a Socialist policy, and issued it as a pamphlet under the title *Socialism Made Plain*, and when a year later it took the name of Social Democratic Federation.

This adoption of Socialism cost it more adherents, especially in view of the strong hostility of Bradlaugh to Socialist doctrines. The Socialists had to make up in energy for their lack of numbers ; and already in 1883 they were beginning to take up the cause of the unemployed with demands for ' home colonization ' and the provision of work by the State, and were securing public attention by their persistent attacks on the advocates of emigration as a remedy for unemployment. At the beginning of 1884, with the help of a donation of £300 from Edward Carpenter, the Federation was able to start *Justice* as a weekly paper, and about the same time two of its leading adherents, Ernest Belfort Bax and J. L. Joynes, a

master at Eton who had just been forced to resign on account of his political activities, began to issue *To-day* as a Socialist monthly. *The Christian Socialist* had been begun in the previous June. In these ventures, and in the stream of pamphlets which now began to be issued either by the Federation or by its members, Henry Hyde Champion, a former artillery officer who had resigned his commission in 1882 owing to his disapproval of Gladstone's Egyptian policy, helped greatly through his part-ownership of the Modern Press, at which most of them were printed. Champion combined his work as a printer with the honorary secretaryship of the Federation, and took a very active part in its propaganda in addition to giving liberal credit to it in his business capacity.

It was in 1882 that Henry George, the great American exponent of the Single Tax, made his first lecturing tour in Great Britain and Ireland. Indeed, it was as a result of a visit to Ireland in George's company that J. L. Joynes was compelled to resign his mastership at Eton. George's famous book, *Progress and Poverty*, had been published in 1879 ; and its appearance at the moment when the land agitation was gathering force in Ireland and the Scottish Highlands, and when land reformers were everywhere much in evidence, gave it a very wide appeal. Very many Socialists were first aroused to a sense of the need for a fundamental change of system by reading or hearing Henry George.

The Socialists, indeed, found George's doctrines exceedingly useful as an introduction to the propaganda of Socialism. They were able to point out, with telling effect, that, whatever might be the situation in the United States, in Great Britain only a small fraction of the toll levied upon labour passed to the landlords, and that the main source of exploitation was the capitalist ownership of industrial and financial capital. Hyndman held a great debate with Henry George on the theme ' Single Tax *versus* Socialism ', and the verbatim report of this encounter circulated widely as a pamphlet, side by side with the report of the debate between Hyndman and Bradlaugh, and with such S.D.F. pamphlets as *Socialism Made Plain* and the *Summary of the Principles of Socialism*, which was written in collaboration by Hyndman and William Morris.

There remained, of course, land reformers who refused to see the point ; and these divided themselves between the Henry Georgites and the advocates of Land Nationalization. These latter had as their rival bible the writings of Herbert Spencer and the new work of Alfred Russel Wallace, the well-known scientist, whose *Land Nationalization* was published in 1882. Wallace himself came to accept a fully Socialist doctrine ; but many old Radicals, who held to a belief in private industrial enterprise, continued to follow the rival banners of Land Nationalization and the Single Tax.

At the beginning of 1884 dissension began inside the Federation over the question of political action, one section contending that parliamentary action was useless as a means of improving the workers' conditions. Bradlaugh seized upon these dissensions to accuse the Socialists of advocating bloody revolution ; and the Federation retaliated by challenging him to a public debate on Socialism. This debate, held in April, 1884, with Hyndman as the protagonist of Socialism, greatly helped the Federation by causing the subject to be keenly discussed throughout the Radical and Socialist movements, with the result that many meetings were addressed by Socialist speakers, and many converts made. The Hyndman-Bradlaugh debate in fact gave the Federation its real start as a propagandist body outside a relatively small circle, chiefly confined to London. A Liverpool branch had been founded as early as 1882 ; but the spread of the Federation outside London only became at all considerable in 1884.

It was at this point that the Annual Conference of the Democratic Federation decided, in August, 1884, to prefix the word ' Social ' to its original name, and adopted as its object " the Establishment of a Free Condition of Society based on the principle of Political Equality, with equal Social Rights for All, and the complete Emancipation of Labour ". These changes brought the Labour Emancipation League over to affiliate as a body ; and with the opening of branches of the Federation in Birmingham, Bristol, Nottingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow and other places all seemed set fair for a rapid advance, especially when the Scottish Land and Labour League, centred in Edinburgh, also agreed to affiliate as a body.

In fact, however, it was from this point that the S.D.F. became involved in serious troubles. In the autumn of 1884 it issued a manifesto to Trade Unionists, probably drafted under the influence of John Burns, in which it made a fierce attack on the Trade Union leaders for their policy of industrial pacifism, and called upon the members of the Unions to repudiate their leaders' anti-class-war attitude. This manifesto, unwisely phrased, was widely interpreted as an attack upon Trade Unionism itself; and it is indeed true that Hyndman personally never understood or sympathized with Trade Unionism. But it is clear that the S.D.F. did not mean to attack Trade Unionism as such, but to expose the limitations of the prevalent craft Unionism, and to urge upon the workers the necessity of more Radical and even revolutionary action. However, a handle had been given for attacking the Socialists as the enemies of Trade Unionism, and the older Union leaders promptly took advantage of it.

Even more serious than this was the great split in the ranks of the S.D.F. which occurred in December, 1884. On this occasion a clear majority of the Executive Committee, headed by the famous poet and artist, William Morris, who had been Treasurer, resigned and seceded from the S.D.F. to form a rival body, the Socialist League. With Morris in this secession were Belfort Bax, Edward Aveling and his wife, Eleanor Marx-Aveling, daughter of Karl Marx, Joseph Lane of the Labour Emancipation League, John L. Mahon of the Scottish Land and Labour League, and Robert Banner of Woolwich. The Labour Emancipation League and the Scottish Land and Labour League went over bodily to the Socialist League. With the S.D.F. remained H. M. Hyndman, John Burns, Herbert Burrows, H. H. Champion, Jack Williams, and Harry Quelch. The London membership was bisected; and there followed a struggle for control of the provinces, in which the Socialist League was mainly victorious for the time in Scotland and Yorkshire, whereas the S.D.F. held its position chiefly in Lancashire and Bristol and some parts of the Midlands.

Even to-day, the causes of this quarrel remain to some extent obscure. It is known that Morris and his adherents accused Hyndman of attempting " to substitue arbitrary rule " in the

S.D.F. " for fraternal co-operation, contrary to the principles of Socialism ". But what precisely the substance of the charge was does not appear in the contemporary accounts of the controversy. That Hyndman was of a dictatorial turn of mind is undoubted ; but one would like to know what precisely he had been trying to dictate. We know that before this the Council had been at loggerheads over the question of the utility of parliamentary action ; and in view of what followed, it seems natural to conclude that this question was involved. This assumption would also explain the silence of the protagonists on both sides about the real source of the trouble.

For in the following year the reconstructed S.D.F. became involved in an affair which threatened for a time to wreck it altogether. At the General Election of November, 1885, the S.D.F. put forward three parliamentary candidates, John Burns at Nottingham, where he had been regularly adopted by the local working-class bodies some time before the contest, and two last-minute candidates—Jack Williams in Hampstead and John Fielding in Kennington, both quite hopeless seats. It came out that these two latter fights had both been paid for by ' Tory gold ', for the purpose of splitting the anti-Conservative vote, and that the gold had come by way of Maltman Barry, once connected with the International Working Men's Association, but now a Tory agent and journalist, who had paid it over to Champion, who in turn had passed it over to the S.D.F.—it was said, without disclosing its source.

Both the ' Tory gold ' candidatures were sheer fiasco. Whereas John Burns, at Nottingham, polled 598 votes against 6,609 for the Liberal, Colonel Seeley, and 3,797 for the Tory, the total votes of the other two nominees were 27 for Williams at Hampsted and 32 for Fielding at Kennington. The effect of these polls was to expose Socialism to ridicule.

As soon as the truth about the ' Tory gold ' leaked out, the storm broke. There was a chorus of denunciation from every quarter. The Fabian Society and the Socialist League passed resolutions condemning the S.D.F. Executive in the strongest terms. The Socialist League called the Executive " a

disreputable gang" : the Fabian Society said that this action was "calculated to disgrace the Socialist movement". The 'Lib.-Labs.' were naturally quite as vehement in their disapproval ; and Radicals of all colours joined the chorus. There were many more secessions, including James Macdonald, later Secretary of the London Trades Council, one of the few leading Trade Unionists in the S.D.F. Bristol and other provincial branches broke away ; and a group under C. L. Fitzgerald, the original editor of *Justice*, seceded and formed the short-lived Socialist Union, taking with it James Ramsay MacDonald, who had then recently come to London, after making his first contact with the S.D.F. at Bristol.

The taking of this 'Tory gold' was, if not quite so immoral as the critics suggested, a quite appalling tactical error. It was merely silly to fight the Hampstead and Kennington seats, with no organization and no prospect of more than a derisory vote. But the question at once became entangled with another, from which it was essentially distinct. Should Socialists fight parliamentary elections at all ?

There were three distinguishable groups among the Socialists of the 'eighties, who for quite different reasons gave a negative answer. One group contended that parliamentary action was useless, and that Socialists, instead of wasting their time over it, should concentrate on preparing for the revolution. This group had, of course, the support of the Anarchists, who were quite an important element, especially among the foreign workers living in London. A second group, headed by William Morris, did not reject parliamentary action altogether, but held that such action by Socialists was premature until they had built up, by agitation and education, a really strong body of Socialist opinion, and could feel assured of making a good showing at the polls, without compromising upon their advanced Socialist principles. Finally, a third group, with strong support among the Fabians, held that Socialists should endeavour to permeate all parties, including a Labour Party, if one could be brought into existence, rather than to create a separate Socialist Party.

This last group was hardly represented inside the S.D.F. by more than a few individuals ; but both the other groups

had been strongly represented, and had formed the main element that had gone over with the Socialist League. In fact, it can be taken as practically certain that this disagreement had been the fundamental cause of the split. But there had been conflicting factors. Hyndman's curious election address of 1880 had caused suspicion that he was really a Tory—and even a Tory agent; and these suspicions, the only foundation of which was Hyndman's hatred of Gladstone's Liberalism, with some tendency towards a jingoism of the Chamberlain brand, were now revived. Engels—Marx had died in 1883—had not forgiven Hyndman his omission of Marx's name from *England for All*; and he threw his weight on the side of Morris and the Socialist League, and perhaps had a hand in bringing the rupture about. At all events for the next few years he ensured that the main body of continental Marxists should recognize the Socialist League, rather than the S.D.F., as the real Socialist organization in Great Britain.

The S.D.F., the victim of its own folly and of Hyndman's indiscretions, thus seemed at the end of 1885 to be nearly at its last gasp. What saved it was the deep economic depression of 1886, in the course of which its remaining leaders, notably John Burns, Champion, and Jack Williams, managed to put themselves at the head of the unemployed agitation, and thereby to recapture the leadership of the left wing among the workers, especially in London, but also to some extent in Lancashire and other provincial centres.

As we have seen, the S.D.F., with its attacks on the emigrationists and its demand for 'home colonization', had been active on behalf of the unemployed in 1883—and the Labour Emancipation League earlier still. The L.E.L. made a practice of holding open-air meetings over a wide area in East London; and the S.D.F. took over this method of propaganda and extended its range. Soon there were troubles with the police. In 1883 the Metropolitan Board of Works attempted without success to stop the meetings on Peckham Rye and other public open spaces. There was more bickering through 1884; but the trouble first came to a head over the Dod Street affair of 1885.

Dod Street was a small street in Limehouse, lined with

warehouses, and on Sundays practically deserted. The S.D.F. speakers, moved on from a neighbouring street, adopted Dod Street as their meeting-place ; but after a few Sundays the police arrested a speaker, and then others on subsequent Sundays. The S.D.F., reinforced by other Socialist and Radical bodies, went on with its meetings ; and at length Jack Williams was fined 40*s*., which he refused to pay, and accordingly was sent to prison for a month.

This led to a great convergence of all the Radical bodies upon Dod Street on the following Sunday, for a mass-meeting of protest. The police charged the crowds, arresting William Morris and other leading Socialists, who were subsequently discharged. The Sunday after that, there was a bigger demonstration than ever, all the societies turning out with banners and bands. John Burns, Hyndman, Champion, Stewart Headlam, Bernard Shaw, James Macdonald—all the leaders were there ; and the police gave way, and thereafter allowed Dod Street to be used as a Sunday meeting-place without further interference.

These, however, were but preliminary skirmishes. The real trouble began in the following year, when the trade depression was at its worst. At that time the 'Fair Traders' were active, tracing the cause of the crisis to the evils of Free Trade and foreign competition ; and the Socialists saw their chance of rescuing themselves from the charge of being Tory agents by arranging a counter-demonstration to one which the 'Fair Traders' had called in Trafalgar Square for February 8th, 1886.

This was 'Black Monday'. The Socialists and Radicals, as well as the 'Fair Traders', flocked to Trafalgar Square ; and after the latter had been allowed their say, the Socialists took charge of the crowd, and held meetings of their own from the plinth of the Nelson Column and from the balustrade. The police, alarmed at the size of the crowd, entered into negotiations with the Socialist leaders about the best method of persuading it to disperse ; and it was arranged that it should be guided in procession to Hyde Park and there break up and return home. On the way, however, insults were flung at the demonstrators from the windows of some of the Pall Mall

clubs, and perhaps some missiles were thrown. The crowds got out of hand and, as Pall Mall happened to be under repair, seized on paving-stones and other objects that were lying about, and began window-smashing. From Pall Mall the trouble spread up St. James's Street into Mayfair, and terrified West End shopkeepers hastened to put up their shutters or barricade their windows. Gradually, the crowds spread themselves out more thinly and dispersed ; but hooligan elements got loose, as they had done in the Spencean troubles seventy years before, and a good deal of damage was done.

As a sequel to this affair, the Commissioner of Police resigned, and was replaced by a warrior made of sterner stuff. This was Sir Charles Warren, with whom for the next few years the London Radicals waged perpetual warfare. A second consequence was that the Lord Mayor's Fund for the relief of distress among the unemployed shot up suddenly to a quite respectable total ; and a third was that four of the Socialist leaders—Burns, Champion, Jack Williams, and Hyndman—were arrested and put on trial for seditious conspiracy.

Aided by notable speeches by Burns and Hyndman, the Socialist leaders were acquitted ; and the unemployed demonstrations went on. At the beginning of 1887, the Socialists organized Church Parades of the unemployed, who attended *en masse* the leading London Churches, in order to call attention to their grievances. They even occupied St. Paul's Cathedral, under John Burns's leadership ; and countless meetings were held, the S.D.F. and the Socialist League collaborating in the struggle against the police, and Bradlaugh and Annie Besant joining in at the head of the Secularist wing of the Radical movement. In 1887 the Bradlaughites organized the Law and Liberty League, which concentrated in practice mainly on upholding the rights of public meeting and demonstration against the police.

In the autumn of that year, the S.D.F. decided to organize a great procession of unemployed to follow the Lord Mayor's Show through the streets of London. This was promptly banned by the police ; and it was then decided to call a mass meeting to be held in Trafalgar Square immediately after the

procession had passed by. The police banned this also ; but the Socialists decided to carry on, and the great gathering was held without molestation or arrests, followed by another monster meeting called at the same place a fortnight later. On this occasion the police were better prepared, and after a furious struggle they managed to drive the demonstrators out of the Square.

So far, though there had been arrests and broken heads, there had been no fatal casualties. But at a further clash with the police in Trafalgar Square in February, 1888, a workman named Alfred Linnell was killed. William Morris wrote his death-song, and he was given a great and solemn funeral by the London workers.

By this time, however, with the rivival of trade, the agitation among the unemployed was dying down, and the Social Democratic Federation was losing much of its appeal. It had temporarily rehabilitated itself after the disasters of 1885 ; but its popularity did not last, despite the gradual decline of the Socialist League, which, in June, 1887, declared definitely against parliamentary action, and thereafter passed rapidly into the hands of the Anarchists. In 1889 the Anarchists gained control of the Executive ; in the same year William Morris was driven from the editorship of its organ, *The Commonweal*, which soon expired when his financial support was withdrawn. Morris and a small group of his adherents thereafter founded the Hammersmith Socialist Society ; but his work for the Socialist movement was nearly over. He was getting old and ill : he died in 1896.

Long before this, new forces had arisen to challenge the S.D.F.'s leadership of the growing movement towards Socialism. The S.D.F. had been from the outset mainly a London movement, and had failed to secure the adherence of more than a few of the younger Trade Union leaders ; and even these it tended to lose, partly because Hyndman had no appreciation of the conditions of the day-to-day Trade Union struggle. Tom Mann, who had been with Burns an active propagandist of the S.D.F. in Battersea, was soon to pass over to the movement which culminated in 1893 in the creation of the I.L.P. John Burns was to ' gang his ain gait ', and

pass out of the Socialist movement altogether, into the Liberal Party which he had so fervently denounced. The London workers were soon to give, in the great Dock Strike of 1889, a much more impressive demonstration of their solidarity than they had given in the unemployed troubles of 1886–87 ; but, though the S.D.F. largely provided the Dockers' leadership, it did not succeed in harvesting the fruits of their victory. A new period was beginning—the period of Keir Hardie and Robert Blatchford and the struggle for independent Labour representation. But before we proceed to describe this new phase, we must turn back to consider certain other currents of opinion in the 'eighties—the development of the 'Lib-. Lab.' movement under Trade Union auspices after the Reform Act of 1884, and the foundation of the Fabian Society, with its non-Marxian, evolutionary Socialism derived from Mill and Jevons and Chamberlain, and with its policy of 'permeation', of which Sidney Webb was the chief progenitor and Bernard Shaw the most brilliant exponent.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRADE UNIONS AND POLITICS

The Trades Union Congress and the Labour Electoral Association—The 'Lib.-Labs.'

After Alexander Macdonald's death in 1881, there were again only two Trade Union Members in the House of Commons—Thomas Burt and Henry Broadhurst—and both were committed to full support of the Liberal Party. Nor did they show any overweening desire to add to their numbers. The Labour Representation League was allowed to die, and no new body took its place. The promotion of Labour candidates came to be regarded as a matter for such Trade Unions as desired to pursue it, or even mainly for the individual Trade Union leader who happened to have political aspirations. The Trades Union Congress, with Broadhurst as secretary, left the question severely alone.

Nevertheless, the General Election of 1885, following hard upon the Reform and Redistribution Acts, brought a sudden increase in the number of Trade Union M.P.s from two to eleven. The 'Lib.-Labs.' in Parliament suddenly became a group large enough to command some attention.

Of the eleven, no fewer than six were miners; for the Miners' Unions were the one section of the movement which, profiting by the enlarged franchise and the new arrangement of seats in the counties, was prompt to seize on the opportunities presented by the Reform Acts. Charles Fenwick (Wansbeck, Northumberland), John Wilson (Houghton-le-Spring, Durham), William Crawford (Mid-Durham), Ben Pickard (Normanton, Yorkshire), and William Abraham (Rhondda, S. Wales) reinforced Burt as representatives of the miners; and it reflected the degree of organization in the coal industry that the miners had two M.P.s in Durham, and two in North-

umberland, as compared with a total of two in all the other coalfields put together.

The other five Trade Union M.P.s were Henry Broadhurst, now returned for Bordesley, one of the new Birmingham seats, Joseph Arch, of the Agricultural Labourers' Union, and three Londoners, George Howell, William Randall Cremer, and Joseph Leicester. At Birmingham, Broadhurst joined actively in the campaign of the Chamberlain *bloc* ; and Chamberlain and his agricultural henchman, Jesse Collings, were among the leading sponsors of Arch's campaign in North-West Norfolk. In this area there was at first a rival Liberal in the field ; but he withdrew after a test poll of the Liberal electors had gone heavily in Arch's favour. Howell in North-East Bethnal Green and Cremer in Haggerston had straight fights against Tories and won easily. Leicester, of the Flint Glass Makers, won South-West Ham—also in a straight fight. These three were all the nominees of Liberal and Radical Associations in their several constituencies. Arch's seat was won in one of the few areas in which agricultural Trade Unionism had managed to retain its hold despite the depression ; and his Union, like the Miners', paid him a small parliamentary salary. But the once great Union was in a bad way, and was rent by internal quarrels ; and the basis of Arch's candidature was insecure. The three Londoners sat for new constituencies carved out of traditionally Radical areas. Except among the miners, provincial Trade Unionism made practically no contribution to the reinforcement of the movement's parliamentary strength.

As we have seen, it was at this election that the Socialists ran John Burns at Nottingham and made their unfortunate 'Tory gold' ventures at Hampstead and Kennington. Moreover, a body founded only in the previous year, the Scottish Land Restoration League, ran five candidates in the Clyde area, on an advanced Radical programme. This League, which had not, like the Scottish Land and Labour League of Edinburgh, gone over to the S.D.F., worked in close conjunction with the English Land Restoration League in London, for a policy of land taxation which was to be increased until the whole value of the land had been taken for the public benefit. Its five

candidates were James Morrison Davidson, a well-known Radical journalist, who later came over to Socialism, but was then a Scottish Nationalist and Land Reformer ; J. Shaw Maxwell, soon to become Chairman of the Scottish Labour Party and later the first General Secretary of the Independent Labour Party ; John Murdoch, an active worker on behalf of the Highland crofters, and soon to be Chairman at the Scottish Labour Party's inaugural meeting ; William Forsyth ; and Wallace Greaves. Shaw Maxwell, fighting Blackfriars, Glasgow—a Labour stronghold in later years—polled 1,158 ; Forsyth, at Bridgeton, got 978. The other three did badly. Greaves, at Tradeston, Glasgow, polled only 86 ; Murdoch, at Partick, only 74 ; and Morrison Davidson, at Greenock, only 65. Though none of the five got near to being elected, these contests deserve to be regarded, quite as much as Burns's fight at Nottingham, as the pioneer battles for independent Labour representation. They were the direct forerunners of Hardie's Mid-Lanark contest of 1888, and of the work of the Scottish Labour Party founded immediately thereafter.

These were all three-cornered contests ; but in addition two notable figures in the Radical movement had straight fights. In Caithness-shire Dr. G. B. Clark, who had been connected with the International Working Men's Association and was now the editor of *The Good Templar*, fought as a crofters' candidate, and won by 2,110 to 1,218 against a Liberal. In North-West Lanarkshire the Radical laird, R. B. Cunninghame Graham, polled 3,442 against 4,545 as a Radical in a straight fight with the Conservative—the prelude to his victory the following year. Both these men were soon to take an active part in helping Hardie in Mid-Lanark, and in the foundation of the Scottish Labour Party. Dr. Clark's victory of 1885 has never been counted among the triumphs of Labour representation ; but it is worthy of record that he won as a crofters' candidate, and against a Liberal.

The Parliament elected in 1885 was short-lived ; for the Gladstone Government formed at the beginning of 1886 lasted only a few months, and by August an appeal to the country had put Lord Salisbury in power. The Home Rule split had smashed the Radical movement to pieces ; and the Liberal

Unionists, headed by Chamberlain, were in process of final alienation from the Gladstonian Liberals. Henry Broadhurst and the rest of the Trade Unionists followed Gladstone on the Home Rule issue ; and Gladstone made Broadhurst Under-Secretary at the Home Office in his Ministry—the first working-man to receive Government office in Great Britain. But a few months later Broadhurst was out of office in consequence of the Government's fall, and back at his post as Secretary of the Trades Union Congress.

At the General Election of 1886, the Gladstonian defeat brought down some of the Government's Trade Union supporters. One of the miners, John Wilson, was beaten at Houghton-le-Spring ; Joseph Leicester lost his seat at South-West Ham ; and Joseph Arch was narrowly defeated in Norfolk by twenty votes. Broadhurst, now ranged against Chamberlain, had to seek a new seat outside the Birmingham district. He fought West Nottingham, where he unseated Colonel Seely, the Liberal Unionist. John Burns, who had fought West Nottingham in the 1885 election, did not intervene again, and Broadhurst was given a straight fight. Howell, Cremer, and five out of the six miners held their seats ; and in the London area the 'Lib.-Labs.' gained East Finsbury, to make up for the loss of West Ham. James Rowlands, Secretary of the Cab Drivers' Union, was the successful candidate. Moreover, there was a second success in Scotland, where the picturesque Socialist laird Robert Bonteen Cunninghame Graham, now best known for his South American stories and sketches, won North-West Lanark under the auspices of the Scottish Land Reformers. Dr. G. B. Clark held his Caithness seat by an enormous majority as a Gladstonian Liberal against a Liberal-Unionist. The total effect of the election was thus to reduce the Trade Union group from eleven to nine (not counting Dr. Clark), but to add Cunninghame Graham as a forerunner of the Scottish Labour Party.

Meanwhile, in connection with these two General Elections, the Trades Union Congress had begun hesitantly to turn its attention to the question of Trade Union representation. At the 1885 Congress James Stafford Murchie, General Secretary of the Carpenters and Joiners, who as a youth had been active

in Manchester on behalf of the International Working Men's Association, moved a resolution welcoming the adoption of workmen candidates and the financial support given to them by some Trade Unions, and also welcoming the increased activity shown by the formation of Labour Associations in a number of towns—notably London and Birmingham. After a debate in which some delegates urged that the Trade Unions should steer clear of party politics, but at least one speaker looked forward to the advent of a Labour Party, the resolution was carried unanimously. At this Congress, however, nothing further was done.

The following year George Shipton, of the Painters, Secretary of the London Trades Council from 1871 to 1896, who had been on the Executive of the Labour Representation League, and had edited in 1881–2 a short-lived Labour paper, *The Labour Standard*, moved a motion in favour of the establishment of district funds for the support of Labour candidates. This led to a long discussion, in which the argument against involving the Unions in party politics was again put forward by several speakers, while others urged that the movement ought to secure the election of working-men Tories as well as Liberals. T. R. Threlfall " urged the Congress to remember that they could not contest any seat without declaring their adherence to one or the other of the great political parties ". Subsequently Threlfall moved for the election of a Labour Electoral Committee, to act in conjunction with the Parliamentary Committee of Congress. He wanted the L.E.C. to be chosen on a divisional basis, and proposed that the whole country should be divided up into eight divisions, each with eight representatives. The Committee should be provisional, and should be instructed to report to Congress at its next annual meeting. After a further long debate, the resolution was carried, with minor changes ; and Congress proceeded to choose the members of the first Labour Electoral Committee. It chose John Wilson, of the Durham Miners, as President, William Abraham, M.P., of the South Wales Miners, and James M. Jack, the Secretary of the Scottish Ironmoulders, as Vice-Presidents ; Stuart Uttley, of the Sheffield Trades Council, a pioneer in the ' Fair Wages Clause ' movement, as

Chairman of Committee ; Edward Harford, Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, as Treasurer ; and T. R. Threlfall himself, of the Southport Trades Council, as Secretary. A small Executive was also chosen ; and for the main Committee some members were appointed at once, and others left to be nominated by local organizations.

This creation of an elaborate organization, with a full list of officers quite independent of those of the Trades Union Congress itself, indicated that from the outset the L.E.C., even if it reported its proceedings to Congress, meant to act independently of Henry Broadhurst and the Parliamentary Committee. Indeed, at the next Congress, that of 1887, Threlfall reported that the L.E.C. had already " covered over a dozen towns with their Labour Electoral Associations, and, so mighty had been the movement in the last twelve months, he had no hesitation in saying that the next House of Commons would contain at least thirty Labour representatives ". It was made plain that the L.E.C. had set to work to create local Labour Electoral Associations affiliated to itself, and had thus already in effect constituted itself an independent body. In fact, after the 1887 Congress the name ' Committee ' was dropped, and it was thereafter known as the Labour Electoral Association.

At this Congress Uttley, on behalf of the L.E.C., moved a resolution to the effect that the Congress should strongly urge on the workmen of the country the necessity of forming L.E.A.s in all the large centres of industry. There followed a confused discussion. Some delegates strongly insisted that the L.E.A.'s should concern themselves with local as well as parliamentary elections, while others renewed the debate about the expediency of having Tory as well as Liberal working men in Parliament, and yet others demanded an independent working-class party. Threlfall, reporting that the L.E.C.'s greatest difficulty had been its lack of any programme, as distinct from the object of securing the election of working men, said that he himself " wanted a distinct Labour Party, with a proper programme ". Ben Pickard, the miner M.P. from Yorkshire, opposed this, whereas Keir Hardie, attending his first Trades Union Congress as delegate from the Ayrshire

Miners, gave strong support to the demand for a separate party and programme. Hardie also attacked Broadhurst for having supported a sweating employer who was a Liberal candidate for Parliament, and charged him with other offences ; and there was a Congress ' scene '. Robert Knight, the Boilermakers' Secretary, moved an amendment calling for payment of M.P.s and the meeting of election expenses out of the rates ; and after this had been accepted the resolution as a whole was carried with only one dissentient. The Labour Electoral Association was thus launched on its career as a separate body, independent of the Trades Union Congress, much as its successor, the Labour Representation Committee, was to be launched thirteen years later.

The following year, the Congress of 1888 again debated the affairs of the L.E.A., on a further resolution of Threlfall urging the formation of associations throughout the country. This time there was more opposition, headed by Charles Fenwick, M.P., of the Northumberland Miners, who attacked the L.E.A. on the ground that some of its adherents had been doing their best to discredit the Labour representatives already in the House of Commons and on other public bodies. He alleged that the L.E.A.'s activities were prejudicing the movement for payment of M.P.s, and declared that he was against Labour representation pure and simple, because workmen had other interests in the State as citizens than those arising from their labour. Threlfall, accepting an amendment to make support for the payment of M.P.s a test question for all Labour candidates, denied that the leaders of the L.E.A. had ever criticized the sitting Labour Members, and, in reply to a delegate who had urged support of middle-class candidates whose views were sound, said that " they could not too specifically declare that no man who was not a labourer was fit for a Labour candidate ".

John Hodge, the leader of the Scottish Steel Smelters, later active in the I.L.P. and the Labour Party, moved an amendment seeking to commit Congress to the principle that Labour Members should be independent of other political parties ; and in the ensuing discussion the wrangle between Keir Hardie and Broadhurst was renewed. Hodge's amendment was lost

by 82 votes to 18, and after further discussion the amended resolution was adopted with only two dissentients.

In 1889 the struggle at Congress was much more bitter, but it had entered on a new phase. The 'Lib.-Labs.' were no longer suspicious of the L.E.A., but were rather defending it against the Socialists. Threlfall, who in previous years had been on the side of the Socialists in the demand for an independent party, now said that, whereas "the prospects of Labour representation were improving every day . . . if there was an obstacle to Labour representation it was the Socialist element in this country. These were their enemies, and he asked the people not to heed them, but to trust their respected leaders".

The fury was greatly increased by Keir Hardie's action at this Congress, in moving that Henry Broadhurst be deposed from his position as Secretary, as a person unfit to hold the office, because he had supported sweating employers at elections and held shares in a public company (Brunner, Mond's) whose employees were overworked and underpaid. The old accusations and counter-accusations were repeated, Hardie being charged with printing his papers at an 'unfair house'. Hardie retorted that *The Miner*, which he had started in 1887 and had recently turned into *The Labour Leader* (February, 1889), was printed at a Trade Union house, and, as for the other paper with which he had been connected, he had resigned from it when its 'unfairness' was exposed. There was much more mud-slinging; and Hardie's resolution was rejected by 177 votes to only 11. Whatever may be thought of Broadhurst's record, Hardie had been guilty of a serious error of tactics.

Before this Congress, Keir Hardie had fought, in 1888, a by-election in Mid-Lanark as a third-party candidate. Born in 1856, Hardie had become known, up to this year, chiefly as a leader of the Scottish miners, and had been earning his living by journalism while he devoted most of his energies to the attempt to reorganize the Lanarkshire and Ayrshire Miners' Unions, which had been shattered during the long depression. He had worked as a miner, chiefly in Lanarkshire, from his tenth year; and in 1879 he had become the agent of the miners

at Hamilton. In this capacity, he was one of the leaders of the Lanarkshire strikes of 1880; but in the following year he was invited to Ayrshire, to help in the organization of the Union there. He passed through the big Ayrshire strike of 1881 and from 1882 earned his living as a journalist on *The Ardrossan Herald* and *The Cumnock News*, as the miners could not afford to pay him any regular salary. By 1886 the Union had been reorganized, and he became its Organizing Secretary, and also secretary of the loosely knit Scottish Miners' Federation, formed in that year. In 1887 he started *The Miner*, as a monthly journal, and was also adopted as miners' candidate for North Ayrshire. The next year a vacancy occurred in Mid-Lanark, and he was put forward there for adoption by the Liberals as a miners' candidate.

The official Liberals, however, claimed the seat for their own nominee; and Schnadhorst, the organizer of the National Liberal Federation, travelled to Scotland in an endeavour to persuade Hardie to withdraw on promise of a seat elsewhere and an allowance of £300 a year in the event of his election if he would stand down at Mid-Lanark. Hardie rejected these offers and persisted in standing against the official Liberal, though Threlfall, on behalf of the Labour Electoral Association, made further efforts to induce him to give way. He polled 617 votes, against 3,847 for the Liberal and 2,917 for the Conservative, receiving the strong support of many of the Scottish Nationalists, headed by Cunninghame Graham, and of H. H. Champion, who was then editing *The Labour Elector.*

Up to this point, Keir Hardie, though he had been a keen advocate of independent Labour representation, had not been in any way publicly identified with Socialism. He had regarded himself as a sort of Liberal, or Radical, standing to the left of the Liberal Party, but not definitely against it. The atmosphere in which he, and most miners, had been brought up, had little in common with that of the London Radicalism, with its strong Socialist tinge and its admixture of foreign Socialist influences, amid which the Social Democratic Federation had grown up. Puritan religion and the advocacy of temperance were strong in the mining communities; and Hardie's Socialism was based much more on

the Bible than on Marx or on any Socialist theory. This enabled him to give to the Trade Unionists of the Northern and Scottish industrial areas a leadership which the dogmatic Marxists and materialists of the S.D.F. were at that time wholly unable to give. It was not so much that Hardie's views were more moderate than those of Hyndman and his followers as that he spoke a different language, which ordinary workmen found it easier to understand. In policy, however, he concentrated chiefly upon immediate grievances, and especially on the miners' demand for the Eight Hours Day and a tolerable living wage.

Out of the Mid-Lanark contest arose the Scottish Labour Party, founded later in the same year, 1888, on a basis of complete independence of the two great parties. Cunninghame Graham—then Radical M.P. for North-West Lanark—became President of this body, and Keir Hardie secretary ; Dr. G. B. Clark was associated with it ; and most of those who had backed the Scottish Land Restoration League in 1885 transferred their allegiance to it. It was not a definitely Socialist body, though its programme included the nationalization of railways and the establishment of national banks, as well as land reform and the eight hours day. Hardie and Cunninghame Graham were seeking to wean the Scottish workers from official Liberalism to Independent Labour representation rather than to secure the adoption of a completely Socialist policy.

At the Trades Union Congress of 1888, in connection with these movements in Scotland, Hardie and a number of other delegates convened a meeting in order to discuss the formation of a distinct Labour Party for Great Britain as a whole. Tom Mann and Henry Hyde Champion were among those who attended, together with a few Trade Union leaders such as William Matkin, of the General Union of Carpenters and Joiners—the rival of the larger Amalgamated Society, and proud of its continuous existence since it had been part of the great Owenite Builders' Union of the 'thirties. But there were few leading figures present ; and the conveners decided that the time was not yet ripe.

By 1889, the year of the great Dock Strike, the battle between

'Lib.-Labs.' and 'Independents' had become much fiercer than before. At that year's Trades Union Congress, the attempted vote of censure on Broadhurst was followed by a discussion on Labour representation, in the course of which Threlfall reported the continued progress of the L.E.A. "In a large number of the principal towns Labour Associations had been formed, and were doing splendid work. They had returned four town councillors for Sheffield. They were fighting valiantly in Liverpool and Bradford". . . and so on. Tait of Glasgow thereupon moved, with the support of Keir Hardie and of Uttley of the L.E.A., that the Trades Union Congress should raise a fund of its own for the promotion of Trade Union candidates, and that this fund should be under the direct control of Congress and of its Parliamentary Committee, which bodies should decide what candidates were to be put forward. This seems like an attempt to sidetrack the central L.E.A., and hand control of the movement back to the Congress itself. It was in reply to this proposal, on which no action was taken, that Threlfall made the bitter attack on the Socialists to which reference has already been made.

At the Congress of 1890 the debate was again renewed. Matkin, as President, reported his attendance at the Hanley Congress of the L.E.A., which had included seventy delegates representing 400,000 workers. He said that there were already at least seventy Labour representatives sitting on Town Councils. Edward Harford of the Railway Servants moved the 'hardy annual' resolution in favour of Labour representation. Threlfall wanted the Parliamentary Committee to call a special Conference to press the demand for payment of M.P.s, the meeting of election expenses out of the rates, and the full democratization of local elections. This, it will be borne in mind, was shortly after the establishment of elective County Councils under the Local Government Act of 1888. Charles Freak, the Secretary of the Boot and Shoe Operatives, demanded a levy on Trade Unions for the support of Labour candidates. James Macdonald, speaking as a Socialist, urged that advocacy of nationalization should be made a test question for all candidates seeking Trade Union approval. John Burns seconded; but the amendment was

lost by 363 votes to 55. The main resolution was then carried with only one dissentient.

This Congress of 1890 was, however, in other respects a very notable one for the Socialists. John Burns and Tom Mann won very great victories over the " Old Unionists ", and much more than wiped out the defeats of the previous year. The resolution pledging Congress to support an Eight Hours Bill, which had been moved without success on countless earlier occasions, was carried by 193 votes to 155 ; and, in Burns's words, the Congress carried sixty resolutions which amounted to " nothing more nor less than direct appeals to the State and municipalities of this country to do for the workmen what Trade Unionism, 'Old' and 'New', had proved itself incapable of doing ". The Trades Union Congress, in effect, had gone over to a sort of collectivism, though not to Socialism in the sense in which that doctrine was understood by the Marxists of the S.D.F. Indeed, as we shall see later, the younger Trade Unionists were turning in the main, not to Marxism or the S.D.F., but to an evolutionary collectivism of which the Fabian Society had already made itself the theoretical exponent, and the Independent Labour Party was soon to become the chief propagandist agent.

In 1891 Congress again heavily defeated James Macdonald's proposal to make nationalization a test question, and also Tait's that the Trade Unions should subscribe to a central parliamentary fund. Hardie then put forward a somewhat similar proposal for a levy of one penny per member to form a parliamentary election fund under the control of the Parliamentary Committee, with a proviso that it should be used only in support of candidates accepting the full Labour programme and endorsed by their local Trades Councils and Trade Unions. This proposal mustered the respectable vote of 93, against 200 ; and Congress then agreed by an overwhelming majority to add to the original resolution in favour of Labour candidates the somewhat ambiguous words " independent of party politics ".

In 1892, the year of the next General Election after 1886, John Hodge was President of Congress. He urged the need for a Labour Party distinct from the Trade Unions, which

would be in danger of disintegration if they became " hotbeds of politics ". Threlfall moved a resolution lamenting the defeat of many Labour candidates at the election, and urging an active campaign for the selection of candidates so as to avoid considerations of " wealth, party, influence, or partisan service ". This was defeated ; but on Hardie's motion the Parliamentary Committee was instructed to prepare a scheme of Labour representation with particular reference to the financial difficulties. James Macdonald's nationalization test was this year rejected only by 153 votes to 128. The Socialists had made a notable advance.

In the following year, 1893, the advocates of independent Labour representation through the Trades Union Congress appeared at last to have won their battle. Ben Tillett, himself a leader of the ' New Unionism ', speaking on behalf of the Parliamentary Committee, proposed the establishment of a separate fund for assisting independent Labour candidates at both local and parliamentary elections. Each Trade Union was to be asked to subscribe 5*s*. for every hundred members, and Congress was to elect annually a special committee representing the contributing societies to administer the fund. Candidates were to be chosen locally, but were to pledge themselves to the full Labour programme drawn up by Congress itself. John Wilson, the Durham Miners' leader, himself a ' Lib.-Lab.' M.P., and an old opponent of the Socialists, seconded the motion.

Naturally, objection was taken on the ground that the Parliamentary Committee was proposing to set up a brand-new body as a rival to the L.E.A., on which it was itself directly represented. To this no answer was attempted beyond Tillett's lame explanation that the new body was meant to be not rival, but complementary ; but the discussion made it plain that many delegates proposed to support the motion out of hostility to the policy of the L.E.A. Cowgill, of Bradford, said of the L.E.A. that " at one time it did good work, but then it degenerated into a wing of the Liberal Party ". Ultimately, the proposal of the Parliamentary Committee was carried by 145 votes to 78.

James Macdonald promptly followed up this discussion by

moving his familiar resolution confining support to candidates who were prepared to support the nationalization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange ; and this time the proposal, supported by Knight of the Boilermakers, John Burns, J. R. Clynes, and Havelock Wilson, the Seamen's leader, who had been elected for Middlesbrough as an Independent Labour M.P. in 1892, was carried by 137 votes to 97. The Trades Union Congress had at last endorsed the Socialist slogan, and the victory of the left seemed complete. But when Keir Hardie attempted to drive home the triumph by moving that the Members elected to Parliament under the auspices of the Congress should act as an " independent party " in the House of Commons, the delegates voted the proposal down by 119 votes to 96.

The Socialist success was indeed much less complete than it appeared. When, at the Congress of 1894, the Parliamentary Committee was called upon to give an account of what it had done to carry out the decisions of the previous year, the answer was as discouraging as it could well have been. The Committee reported that it had sent out a circular drawing the attention of the affiliated bodies to the decisions of Congress, but also pointing out that Congress had omitted to appoint any special committee to take charge of the proposed new organization, though this was provided for in the resolutions passed. The Parliamentary Committee had therefore invited secretaries whose societies were desirous of joining the proposed organization to send in their names, in order that a special conference of these societies might be convened to appoint a committee and take the other necessary steps. To this circular only two replies had been received ; and the Committee had therefore felt that it was impossible to proceed further with the matter. The plain fact was, of course, that Charles Fenwick, Broadhurst's successor as Secretary to the Trades Union Congress, and himself a 'Lib.-Lab.' M.P., did not want anything done ; and in this attitude he had the support of most of the secretaries of the big Unions, and of most of the members of the Parliamentary Committee itself.

It is natural to ask why, if this was the Parliamentary Committee's attitude, it had in the previous year sponsored Ben

Tillett's proposal for the establishment of a parliamentary fund and an electoral organization under the control of the Trades Union Congress. The answer, I think, must be that the character of the proposal had been radically changed by the carrying of James Macdonald's amendment making support of nationalization a test question for Trades Union Congress candidates. The proposals, in their original form, might have served as a measure whereby Trade Union candidates who were in no sense Socialists could have been supported, merely on condition of professing some vague sort of " independence ". But, despite the defeat of Hardie's proposal to form an independent party, James Macdonald's resolution was enough to rule this out, and to ensure the hostility of all the non-Socialist Trade Union leaders. I think, too, that many voted for Ben Tillett's proposal at the 1893 Congress because they hoped that the Parliamentary Committee's scheme might result in the setting up of a non-Socialist Trade Union Labour Party which would supersede and destroy the Independent Labour Party, which Keir Hardie and his friends had established, as we shall see, earlier in the same year. This seemed to be impossible in view of Macdonald's resolution, and accordingly the Parliamentary Committee changed sides. At the 1895 Congress we find the President, Jenkins, making a fierce attack on the I.L.P. in connection with what had happened at that year's General Election. In Jenkins's view, the I.L.P. had brought discredit upon the whole Labour movement by fighting hopeless seats. " Adherents of the I.L.P. harassed and opposed genuine Trade Unionist candidates who happened also to be Liberals." The Congress then proceeded to revise the Standing Orders so as to expel the representatives of the Trades Councils, which had been in effect its founders. This was done on the plea that, as their members were mostly represented also through the national Trade Unions, the presence of their delegates involved " dual representation ". But the real reason was that too many of the Trades Council delegates held advanced Socialist views. For the time being, the Socialist cause at the Trades Union Congress had suffered a very serious reverse.

But, in all this, what had become of the Labour Electoral Association, about which most of the disputants at successive

Trades Union Congresses seemed to have forgotten entirely? The L.E.A. existed as a central body, with T. R. Threlfall as Secretary, until 1895, when it held its last Congress. But at any rate by 1893 it had ceased to be of any importance. It petered out gradually after the General Election of 1892; for, though at its final Congress it was still able to muster 89 delegates, it is doubtful whether by that time they represented much more than themselves.

Briefly, the history of the Labour Electoral Association seems to have been this. From 1887 onwards it set out to create local L.E.A.s wherever it could, usually employing the local Trades Council as its intermediary and endeavouring to make the local L.E.A. an auxiliary of the Trades Council. Acting in this way, it was instrumental in securing the election of a considerable number of Trade Unionists to serve on Town Councils and other public bodies; but it did not seek to send its candidates to these bodies as members of a distinct Labour Party, or even of a distinct group. Its policy in both local and national elections, as laid down at its Hanley Congress of 1890, was to refuse support to candidates who were not endorsed by the local Trades Council or by a " properly organized Labour Federation "—which meant, in practice, a body organized under the auspices of the Trades Council. This meant that, where the Trades Council was not under Socialist influence, the L.E.A. refused endorsement to Socialist candidates, whom it regarded as interlopers, and not as ' genuine ' working-class representatives. For example, it opposed John Burns's candidature at Nottingham in 1885, on the ground that the Nottingham Trades Council was not behind him.

As long as most of the Trades Councils remained in the hands of the ' Lib.-Labs.', the L.E.A. was able to act with some effect as an electoral machine, especially in local elections. But, as the Socialists began to capture the Trades Councils, especially after 1889, the strength of the L.E.A. was steadily undermined. One after another the local L.E.A.s broke away from the effective control of the central body, and followed an independent policy of their own; and in other cases there was a split, and a rival ' Labour Representation League ' or ' Council ' was set up.

As this happened, the central L.E.A. came to consist more and more exclusively of a ' Lib.-Lab.' rump. In its earlier years there were strenuous battles at its Congresses between ' Lib.-Lab.' and ' Independent ' delegates. But to an increasing extent, the ' Independents ' stayed away, leaving the organization to fall more and more completely into Liberal hands. Fred Hammill, an active Fabian and I.L.P. member, who fought Newcastle-on-Tyne as an Independent Labour candidate in 1895, wrote as follows in *The Fortnightly Review* of April 1894.

> Labour Electoral Associations, national and local, have been formed with a special leaning towards Labour—some favourable to independent action, others as auxiliaries to the Liberal Party. The members of the L.E.A. have long relied on the sympathy and promises of the bountiful Liberal Party . . . they were smiled on and flattered, and to goad them on to greater support a few of the members were created J.P.s, with promises of more deserts to follow. This has proved to be the end of Liberal sympathy and support. The L.E.A. has now found out . . . that so long as the Association will remain subordinate . . . so long can it remain under the Liberal wing ; but as soon as it says *we want* . . . *a man of our own choice, a man of independent principles and policy*, the Liberal Party and the L.E.A. not only part friendship, but they fly at each other's throats like political tigers.

Hammill went on to say that " generally speaking, these associations are only useful educationally ; their direct political action amounts practically to nothing ".

The central L.E.A. was particularly opposed to propaganda candidatures. It declared in 1890 that " the action of any few men in forcing a candidate on a constituency when the general feeling of the working class is hostile to such a candidate is an error of judgment, as such a course of action is likely to bring the cause into disrepute ". It was also nearly always against three-cornered contests, favouring the traditional policy of asking the Liberals to agree to one workman running in partnership with a middle-class Liberal in double constituencies (a policy for which, as we have seen, there was much less scope after the Redistribution Act of 1885), or alternatively of demanding a test ballot of the Liberal electors between the working-class and the middle-class nominee. To an increasing extent, as it fell more and more under Liberal influence, it

actually opposed Labour candidates who would not abide by these methods. It was against Keir Hardie at Mid-Lanark in 1888, and against Ben Tillett at West Bradford in 1892, even though Tillett had the support of the local Trades Council. It was even declared by a Bradford L.E.A. delegate that Tillett ought not to be supported because he was being helped by the Fabian Society, which was not a ' recognized Labour organization '. At its last gasp in 1895, after the Labour defeats suffered in the General Election of that year, we find the L.E.A. declaring,

> Disaster has fallen on us, not from *without*, but from *within*. The Labour Barque has been treacherously piloted upon rocks by frothy ecstatic dreamers and administrative failures, who seek to ruin and destroy, by spite and spleen, all homogeneity and unity in the ranks of Labour. Save our representatives, our old men, our wages, our unemployed, our hearths and homes from their cruel, crossheaded, and blighting influence.

The period of the L.E.A.'s maximum influence was between 1890 and 1892, while the ' Independents ' were still struggling inside it, and had not yet broken away into the I.L.P. At the L.E.A. Congress of 1890, there were 120 delegates, claiming to represent 750,000 members, usually through the local Trades Councils. It was very much in evidence at the General Election of 1892, when both the ' Lib.-Labs.' and the ' Independents ' put forward a considerable array of candidates. It is not easy in all cases to assign a candidate to his appropriate group, and it is doubtful whether one or two of the L.E.A. nominees should be ranked as ' Lib.-Labs.' or not. But the general position is clear. The nine sitting ' Lib.-Lab.' M.P.s all defended their seats, except Crawford, of the Durham Miners, whose place in Mid-Durham was taken by his colleague, John Wilson (defeated at Houghton-le-Spring in 1886). All except Broadhurst were re-elected; but Broadhurst's defeat by Colonel Seely at West Nottingham was felt as a severe blow. He did not get back to Parliament until 1894, when he was returned for Leicester. In the meantime he had been beaten again at a by-election at Grimsby, in 1893.

In addition to the seven re-elections, the ' Lib.-Labs.' regained North-West Norfolk, where Joseph Arch won the seat

he had lost in 1886. They also held Mid-Durham, with John Wilson as candidate ; and they gained the seat at Ince, Lancashire, where Sam Woods, the miners' leader, was returned. But a dozen or so other 'Lib.-Lab.' candidates were beaten, including Threlfall at Liverpool (Kirkdale). In view of the high hopes expressed by L.E.A. spokesmen, this was by no means a satisfactory result, in an election in which the Liberals were in general successful.

In England, there were not many 'Independent Labour' candidates in 1892. The S.D.F. ran W. K. Hall at South Salford, where he polled 553 votes. At West Bradford, Ben Tillett ran as 'Independent Labour', with Trades Council and Fabian support, and polled 2,749, losing by 557 to the Liberal, who was backed by the L.E.A. In Bethnal Green, H. R. Taylor ran against George Howell, polling only 106 ; and other London candidates were Robert Donald (Hoxton), Ben Ellis (Peckham), and George Bateman (Holborn). The recently formed Scottish Labour Party put eight candidates in the field. Cunninghame Graham, who had been elected for North-West Lanark as an Independent in 1886, now fought Camlachie (Glasgow) as a Labour candidate, but polled only 906. In Glasgow there were two other Labour candidates—Robert Brodie in the College Division (225) and Bennett Burleigh, at Tradeston (783). J. Wilson stood for Central Edinburgh (438), Chisholm Robertson for Stirlingshire (663), and J. Wooller for Perth (907) ; and Henry Hyde Champion (Aberdeen South 991) and James Macdonald (Dundee 354) came north to reinforce the Scottish contingent. These were all fights against the Liberals, who were very strongly entrenched in Scotland. There were no successes, except that Dr. G. B. Clark, now ranking as a Liberal, again held Caithness-shire by a big majority. Even Cunninghame Graham could not get back to Parliament.

In England, on the other hand, the 'Independents' scored three victories, or two at least—for Havelock Wilson, the Seamen's leader, though he was returned for Middlesbrough against both Liberal and Conservative opponents, ranked somewhat doubtfully. He belonged to the L.E.A., and was soon to identify himself completely with the 'Lib.-Labs.' He

won by a majority of 679 against a Liberal and a Liberal-Unionist. John Burns, at Battersea, was offered the backing of the Liberal Association. He refused, but was given a straight fight with the Conservative, winning by 5,616 votes to 4,057. Keir Hardie, invited to contest South-West Ham, found Joseph Leicester, the former 'Lib.-Lab.' M.P. for the division, as well as a Tory, in the field against him. But Leicester, who had been beaten in 1886, was forced to withdraw for lack of support; and Hardie won, in a straight fight with the Tory, by 1,232. He and Burns are generally counted, sometimes with Wilson, as the pioneers of Independent Labour representation, G. B. Clark's first election in 1885 and Cunninghame Graham's in 1886 being ignored, on the ground that they did not then stand as Labour candidates.

In addition to the ten undoubted 'Lib.-Labs.' and the three 'Independents', including Havelock Wilson, the Parliament of 1892 had two Irish Members, Michael Austin (West Limerick) and E. Crean (Ossory), who are usually regarded as Labour representatives. Including these, the full 'Labour' strength was fifteen, as against ten in the previous Parliament. But the Trade Union group was not pleased. It had risen only from nine to ten, or eleven, counting Havelock Wilson—a poor return for the campaigning of the L.E.A. Of the ten, six were miners and three Londoners. The provinces, except some of the mining areas, remained singularly unresponsive to the Labour appeal.

The three 'Independents', Hardie, Burns, and Havelock Wilson, did not coalesce to form a Labour group. Hardie did offer to accept Burns as his leader; but Burns, who was rapidly cutting his old connections with the S.D.F., was by no means minded to accept the discipline of the new Independent Labour organization which was just taking shape. Havelock Wilson, though he fought hard battles against the shipowners' attempts to break the Seamen's Union with the aid of blackleg labour, was no Socialist, and found himself much more at home among the 'Lib.-Labs.' than with Keir Hardie. In the new Parliament, Hardie alone really stood for the emergent force of Independent Labour.

Legend has gathered in plenty round Hardie's first appear-

ance in the House of Commons, wearing his cloth cap and his workman's clothes, and about the brass band which is alleged to have escorted him to Westminster. Hardie himself always denied the brass band, and even threw doubt on the assertion that he had intended any sort of demonstration. According to him the affair was quite unpremeditated, and the band consisted of a single cornet. But it is undoubted that Hardie, when he had taken his seat, behaved deliberately in a way that was meant to attract public notice. He constituted himself in the House, from the very outset, the spokesman of the unemployed, moving an amendment to the Address demanding legislation for the provision of work, and never missing an opportunity of drawing the House's attention to their grievances.

But it was not the plight of the unemployed that provided the opportunity for the most sensational incident which arose out of Keir Hardie's presence in the House of Commons. This occurred nearly two years after his election—in June, 1894. On the 23rd of that month two things happened : the Duchess of York had a child, and 260 miners were killed in a terrible colliery disaster at Cilfynydd, South Wales. On the next day, the French President, Carnot, was assassinated ; and two days later there was a general lock-out of the Scottish miners.

Parliament's response to these events was embodied in a vote of condolence to the French people, and in an address of congratulation to the Queen on the birth of the child. It roused Hardie to fury that no word was said to express the House's sympathy for the relatives of the dead miners. He rose, when the vote of sympathy with the French people was proposed, and asked Sir William Harcourt whether a resolution of sympathy with the Welsh miners' relatives was to be moved. Harcourt, probably not at all realizing Hardie's mood, answered offhandedly that no resolution was projected. ' I can dispose of that now,' he added, ' by saying that the House does sympathize with these poor people.' This Hardie regarded as insulting ; and when the motion of congratulation on the royal birth came on, he put down an addition, asking the Queen to express her sympathy with the Welsh victims,

and the House to record its detestation of a system which made inevitable the periodic sacrifice of miners' lives. This was ruled out of order; and Hardie thereupon spoke against the congratulatory motion by way of protest against the House's callousness. There was a tremendous Commons scene, with members shouting and yelling at Hardie from all parts of the House. He was also fiercely attacked in the press; but he retorted that to him at any rate the death of 260 miners mattered very much more than one royal birth.

From that moment Hardie was regarded in political circles as a wild beast, and denounced most bitterly, now as a dangerous revolutionary, and now as a charlatan and self-seeker who was ready to commit any outrage in pursuit of notoriety. That Hardie liked the limelight is true enough; but it is most improbable that any consideration of consequences was in his mind at this time. He was a man of strong feelings, and his furious indignation was entirely genuine. He felt that his own class—his own miners—were being insulted; and he reacted instinctively in the way that was likely to be most effective in making his protest heard.

Keir Hardie was at this time thirty-seven years old, but looked older. His early life had been one of hardship, and his manhood a time of unsparing hard work under difficult conditions. He had a fine presence, and without eloquence he was a forcible and moving speaker with a fine voice. He wrote as well as he spoke; and much of his journalistic writing in *The Miner* and *The Labour Leader* will bear reading to-day. He knew how to put a point simply, and so that it would go home to plain men; and he had an art of weaving effectively into both speeches and articles a dash of lively personal reminiscence and more than a dash of telling quotation from the Bible. Whatever his religious beliefs may have been by this time, he had not forgotten his upbringing or his days as a preacher and temperance advocate. He turned most of his economic arguments into moral discourses in which the capitalist class was cast for the part of Satan. This was not affectation, or calculated for effect: it came natural to him. And that it did so was highly opportune at a time when the advocates of Socialism and Labour representation were trying to

win over a working class still largely tied to Nonconformity, and held fast to Liberalism by the close alliance between the Chapel and the Liberal electoral machine. The ' Lib.-Labs.' were mostly lay preachers as well as Trade Union officials ; and the task of winning over their followers needed a man such as Hardie who could speak a language they could readily understand.

This it was that made Hardie, rather than Mann, or Burns, or Tillett, the natural leader of the New Unionists when they began to turn their attention to politics. Hardie, despite his public reputation for wildness, did not sound at all wild to a gathering of miners or iron-workers or factory operatives who had been brought up on the Bible, and were much readier to accept Socialism when it came to them clothed in the garments of morality than when it was presented in economic terms or by means of slogans of class-war. Moreover, the ' blasphemies ' current among many S.D.F. speakers, as well as in the circles of Secularist Republicanism, outraged many workers, to whom Keir Hardie was able to make a much more congenial appeal. This ethical Socialism had its bad as well as its good side. It was very apt to be woolly-minded, and to leave those who were moved by it with but a glimmering of what Socialism meant. But, for good or ill, it was an immensely powerful force in building up the political Labour movement during the next few years.

CHAPTER IX

THE NEW UTILITARIANS

The Rise of the Fabian Society

In carrying on the history of the 'Lib.-Labs.' as far as the death of the Labour Electoral Association in 1895, I have for convenience abandoned a strict historical sequence. It is now necessary to go back in order to give an account of the little band of Socialist 'intellectuals' who founded the Fabian Society in 1883, and thereafter developed it into a body which was able to exert an influence on the British Socialist movement altogether out of proportion to its membership. The Fabians were, from the very beginning, above all else collectivists. They believed in the extension of State and municipal enterprise to cover an ever-widening range of services, in the public ownership of land and of the essential industries, and in the enlargement of protective legislation to ensure a legal eight hours day, a legal minimum wage, improved factory and workshop conditions, and the public employment of the unemployed. They were enthusiasts for the development of local government on democratic lines, for more effective sanitary legislation, for better public education. Their views on these and other subjects they developed in the famous series of *Fabian Tracts*, which they also used to make telling exposures of the shortcomings of capitalist enterprise. *Facts for Socialists* and its local counterparts, *Facts for Londoners*, *Facts for Bristol*, and so on, were admirable ammunition for the developing Socialist movement. In 1889 they put forward their general point of view in *Fabian Essays*—the most important theoretical presentation of the peculiarly English brand of evolutionary Socialism.

Fabian Socialism was, indeed, evolutionary in its essence. As against the Marxist belief in a dialectical process of

revolution, the Fabians advanced the view that Socialism could be made to grow gradually out of the existing institutions of society by a process of evolutionary development. Agreeing with Marx that the historical forces of economic growth were inevitably ' socializing ' one part after another of the lives of men, they held that there was no need to overthrow the existing State, but only to capture it and transform it into an instrument of welfare.

This view did not indeed come all at once. It was worked out by the Fabians during their first few years of activity, largely under the influence of Sidney Webb. Bernard Shaw, after a Marxist phase, became an enthusiastic convert. In the middle 'eighties, some of the Fabians were for a time active in the Social Democratic Federation. But by 1889, when *Fabian Essays* appeared, the Society had made up its mind ; and the group of exceptionally clever people at its head, including Bernard Shaw and Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Sydney Olivier, Graham Wallas, Hubert Bland, Annie Besant, Stewart Headlam and Edward R. Pease, proceeded to make a concerted effort to bring the growing ' Independent ' Labour movement over to their ideas.

In their municipal programme, the Fabians took over and developed the ' gas and water ' Socialism of Joseph Chamberlain and his Sanitary Conference of 1875. Their ideas on the reform of taxation had also much in common with those of Chamberlain's ' Unauthorized Programme '. But they were entirely hostile to his notions of peasant proprietorship ; and they went far beyond him in their desire to supersede capitalist institutions by public enterprise. When Chamberlain deserted the Radical cause, the leadership in the agitation for Municipal Socialism passed mainly into the hands of the Fabians.

Chamberlain, however, had never been a theorist, whereas a quite definite philosophy underlay the Fabian programme. Webb and his fellow-workers were Benthamites, Utilitarians of the school of Bentham and Mill, presenting a new version of the doctrine of ' the greatest happiness of the greatest number ' in terms appropriate to the new age. They held that, whereas in Bentham's day the main task might have been

the removal of forms of State interference which prevented happiness, in their own day the supreme need was the enactment of new measures of State intervention in order to promote happiness. They fought against *laisser-faire* on the basis of the very philosophy on which it was supposed to rest.

Their economics, like their politics, were of the utilitarian brand. They needed for this purpose not, like Marx, a revolutionary critique of capitalist society such as the theory of surplus value, but rather a new interpretation of the orthodox economics of Stanley Jevons, so as to weight ' utility ' in accordance with the view that a shilling meant much less real utility to a rich man than to a poor one. It followed that, the more evenly incomes were distributed, the greater the sum total of utility and happiness was likely to be.

This rejection of Marxian, and acceptance of Jevonian, economics meant that the Fabians were continually at loggerheads with the S.D.F., whose orators never wearied of reciting the Marxian theory of value. But it helped them in their appeal to the rising force of ' Independent Labour ' which was gradually shaking itself free from Liberalism, because it enabled them to address the leaders of the movement in terms much more easily understood, and much more closely related to the English political tradition. The Fabians, in addition to publishing their *Tracts* and *Essays*, sent their speakers all over the country, at a time when intelligent Socialist speakers were scarce. After 1889 they created numerous local Fabian Societies in the provinces, leaving these bodies practically independent of the parent Society in London. Many of the local Fabian Societies were subsequently merged in the Independent Labour Party, which they helped to leaven. Others survived, to do active work, especially as promoters of Labour representation in the municipalities.

Politically, the Fabians combined two attitudes which seemed to many persons inconsistent, and caused a good deal of suspicion of them on that account. They favoured the creation of an Independent Labour Party, but were not willing completely to merge themselves in it if it arose. This was because, in accordance with their ' gradualist ' and evolutionary notions, they believed in a policy of ' permeation '—

that is, in trying to influence any and every party or group that could be got to take up any of their ideas. They held that the workers ought to have a party of their own, independent of Liberals and Conservatives. But they did not believe that such a party would be fully Socialist, in their sense, or that work inside it could exhaust the possibilities of advancing the Socialist cause. Bernard Shaw, the leading Fabian spokesman at the Bradford Conference which founded the I.L.P. in 1893, put their point perfectly clearly ; but he did not find it easy to make the Fabian attitude understood. It seemed to the ordinary working-class Socialist both disingenuous and disloyal of the Fabians simultaneously to urge the workers to cut free of the Liberal and Conservative parties, and to insist that the Fabian Society should remain free to accept Liberals, and even Tories, as members, and to do all it could to permeate these parties with its ideas.

Nevertheless, the Fabian attitude was perfectly consistent, on the assumption that the independent 'Labour Party' would not be a fully Socialist—i.e. collectivist—party, but rather a political expression of the working-class point of view. The independent Labour Party would doubtless be the most 'permeable' of the political parties ; but since the question was in the opinion of the Fabians one of evolution and not of revolution, it was important to permeate all parties. Had not Chamberlain at one point largely permeated the Radicals, and subsequently carried over some of his municipal ideas into the Conservative camp ? In local politics especially, permeation seemed evidently to offer the best prospect of securing real advances in the cause of public health and happiness.

While Sidney Webb was the principal architect of Fabian collectivism, Beatrice Potter, who became Mrs. Sidney Webb, was chiefly responsible for initiating the great studies of Trade Unionism and Co-operation which they worked upon together in the 'nineties. The inspiration behind these studies was the New Unionism which emerged at the end of the 'eighties and found expression in the Match Girls' Strike of 1888 (inspired by another 'Fabian essayist', Annie Besant) and in the Gasworkers' and Dockers' struggles of the following year. The Webbs set out to understand and interpret the democratic

organizations which the working classes had created for themselves under capitalism, and to think out the position which these organizations ought to hold in the coming collectivist society. They worked hard for Consumers' Co-operation as well as for Trade Unionism, and their writings influenced the development of both these movements.

Large membership the Fabians neither secured nor sought. They were not an army, but a group of planners ; and numbers would have destroyed the cohesion which was one element in their strength. They received with remarkable calm both the secession of dissentients who fell out of sympathy with them and the coming and going of local Fabian Societies. They went on with their work, which was essentially that of providing the British Labour movement with a programme of evolutionary Socialism. First the I.L.P. and then its successor the Labour Party accepted from them a large part of its programme. The Fabian Society was one of the bodies which joined in creating the Labour Representation Committee in 1900 ; but even thereafter it successfully maintained its right to retain sympathetic members of other political parties within its ranks. It went on with its work of 'permeation', as a universal provider of collectivist plans and notions to anyone who would accept its wares. And when at last, in 1918, the Labour Party adopted a definitely Socialist programme—*Labour and the New Social Order*—it was appropriate that it should be drafted by Sidney Webb.

CHAPTER X

THE TRADE UNION AWAKENING

New Unionism and the Dock Strike of 1889—The Scottish Labour Party. The Election of 1892 and the First Independent Labour M.P.s—Robert Blatchford's "Clarion"

In 1885 the Trade Unions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress had in all only half a million members : in 1890 they had nearly 1,600,000 : in 1895 their membership had fallen again to one million. Even after the decline from the peak of 1890, membership had been doubled. The whole character of the Trade Union movement had been profoundly changed. In 1885 Trade Unionism was practically confined to a narrow range of industries, and even in these only the more skilled workers were usually members of a Union. The skilled craftsmen of the engineering, shipbuilding, building, printing and a few other trades—these, together with the skilled coal hewers, iron and steel-workers, bootmakers, and cotton operatives, constituted the main body of the movement.

During the next five years there was a startling revolution. The miners, who organized their new Miners' Federation of Great Britain in 1888, expanded their membership at a great rate, and enrolled many of the less skilled workers as well as the hewers. The cotton operatives' Unions drew together in 1887 in the United Textile Factory Workers' Association, and began to press for improved factory legislation and the eight hours day. The skilled engineers and shipbuilders formed the Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades Federation in 1889. The woollen workers, practically unorganized except in a very few highly skilled crafts, began to forge ahead with their General Union of Textile Workers, originally formed in 1881. Thus, most sections of the 'Old' Unionism experienced a rapid expansion, and there was almost everywhere a marked

tendency towards closer co-operation among the separate Unions in a single industry.

This, however, was not the only, or the most startling, development. As the deep depression of the middle 'eighties began to lift, there was a rapid movement towards organization among classes of workers previously quite unorganized, or whose attempts at organization in the boom of the 'seventies had left no permanent Unions behind. Dock-workers, seamen, gasworkers, labourers in the metal industries, and many other types of manual labourers flocked into new Unions, as fast as they could be set up. Parallel movements developed among shop assistants, clerks, teachers, and other groups of 'black-coated' employees. Trade Unionism among railwaymen, previously insignificant, made a leap forward; and Joseph Arch's National Agricultural Labourers' Union, which had almost died, revived over a considerable part of the country.

Many of the older Trade Union leaders shook their heads, and predicted that the 'New' Unionism would perish within a few years as completely as the similar, but much smaller, movement of the early 'seventies had passed away. It was impossible, they argued, for Unions which had no friendly benefits to hold their members together to survive a serious depression; and most of the 'New' Unions had no such benefits, partly because their leaders wanted them to be purely fighting organizations, but also because the low-paid workers who were now coming into the movement could not afford the high contributions which friendly benefits required.

To a certain extent, the 'Old' Trade Union leaders were right. The wave of organization did recede. But the 'New' Unionism was not destroyed. It held together lastingly, albeit with a reduced membership. Moreover, to a considerable degree the spirit of the 'New' Unionism infected the 'Old'. There was no return—no complete return—to the methods and policies of the Trade Unionism of the early 'eighties.

In this book, we are not concerned with Trade Unionism as such, but only with its relation to the political Labour movement. At this point, however, the connection is very

close. It was one and the same impulse that, between 1885 and 1895, doubled the strength of the Trade Unions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress and brought into being a powerful movement for the creation of an indépendent party based on the organized strength of the working class.

The pioneering work of the Social Democratic Federation and the Socialist League must have contributed largely to these developments. In London especially, the work of the Socialists on behalf of the unemployed was a powerful factor in awakening the consciousness of the worse-paid workers and turning their thoughts, as trade revived, towards Trade Unionism and political action. But the two Socialist Societies—the Fabians were only beginning really to count in the later 'eighties—had very little hold upon the mass of the workers ; and neither of them effectively appreciated the possibilities of the situation. The Socialist League was passing into the hands of the Anarchists ; and the S.D.F., as we have seen, showed, despite its work for the unemployed, a marked inability to understand the potentialities of the Trade Union movement. New leadership was needed ; and this the workers found partly in men, such as Tom Mann, whose political education had begun inside the S.D.F., but to a greater extent among those who had hitherto regarded themselves as Liberals or Radicals, and were being brought over to a Socialist position, not by theoretical conversion to the views of Karl Marx, but by the day-to-day conditions of the industrial struggle and by growing disillusionment with the Liberal Party.

With Chamberlain's departure, and with the increasing preoccupation of Gladstone with Home Rule, the Radical impulses of the 'seventies had died away. Some attempt was made to revive them when it had become plain that Liberalism was in serious danger of losing its working-class support. But the attempt was made too late, and the Liberal 'Newcastle Programme' of 1892 was only a very pale shadow of Chamberlain's 'Unauthorized Programme' of 1885. Its chief outcome was the introduction of graduated death duties by Sir William Harcourt in 1894. Such as it was, it was the response of Liberalism to a movement which had already implanted

the desire for an Independent Labour Party too strongly for the tendency to be reversed.

With Radicalism dying or, in its extreme form under Bradlaugh, too much tainted with atheism to appeal to a working class largely Nonconformist and essentially religious by upbringing and tradition, the way was clear for a new party as soon as the economic conditions became propitious for it. They became very propitious as the revival which began in 1887 turned into the trade boom of 1889, and as unemployment fell from 10 per cent in 1886 to only 2 per cent in 1889 and 1890.

Side by side with the growth of Trade Unions there developed apace the movement for independent working-class political action. Branches of the 'Lib.-Lab.' Labour Electoral Association broke away, and declared for political independence. New bodies for the same purpose sprang up in many places. There was a great growth of Trades Councils in areas in which they had never existed before. Simultaneously, the English and Scottish Land Restoration Leagues, which had been languishing, took a leap forward ; and every sort and kind of reform organization girded up its loins for the fray.

It was in Scotland that the new political movement first took formal shape. We have seen how Keir Hardie had been adopted in 1887, the year in which he started *The Miner*, as miners' candidate for North Ayrshire, but in the following year, had transferred his activities to Mid-Lanark, when a vacancy there offered the miners the chance of putting him forward. We have seen also how the Labour Electoral Association intervened in order to persuade him to withdraw, and how he refused the blandishments of the Liberals. Yet at this time Hardie would still have described himself as a Liberal—of sorts ; and his programme had in it nothing essentially Socialist.

We have seen that the importance of the Mid-Lanark contest was that it led up directly to the creation of the Scottish Labour Party at the beginning of 1889, with R. B. Cunninghame Graham, then in Parliament as an Independent Radical, as its President and Hardie as its principal organizer.

This was the body which put eight candidates into the field at the General Election of 1892. Its main strength was in and around Glasgow, and in the coalfields of the West. But it was by no means solidly backed by the Scottish miners. Liberalism in Scotland had still a very powerful hold on the working class.

In England development was more sporadic, and Wales remained practically untouched. It is a curious fact, in view of the later strength of Labour and Socialism in South Wales, that the miners there were a long way behind the rest of the coalfields in modernizing their organization and coming over to the 'New' Unionism. In 1892, William Abraham, generally known as 'Mabon', and noted for his fine singing voice and his work as a Methodist preacher as well as a miners' organizer, held his seat as a 'Lib.-Lab.' in the Rhondda; but not a single independent Labour candidate appeared. Even in 1895 there was only one—E. Hall Hedley, at Swansea. The strength of Nonconformity kept Wales overwhelmingly Liberal all through the 'nineties.

The movement in England had as its rallying point first H. H. Champion's paper, *The Labour Elector*, founded in 1888, and subsequently Joseph Burgess's *Workman's Times*, which began in 1890 and lasted until 1894. Burgess published a number of local editions, and made his paper the principal organ of the Labour representation movement until it was superseded by *The Labour Leader*, which, started in 1889 as a monthly by Keir Hardie in Scotland, became in 1894 a weekly and the semi-official organ of the I.L.P. Annie Besant's *The Link*, founded in 1888, which caused the match-girls' strike of that year, was more a Radical than a Socialist organ, and its pages were filled largely with accounts of the struggle with Sir Charles Warren over the right of public meeting, and of the proceedings of Bradlaugh's Law and Liberty League, started in 1887.

Much more influential than any of these journals was *The Clarion*, which Robert Blatchford and Alexander M. Thompson founded in 1891. Blatchford was already well known as a journalist. He had served in the Army and, after his discharge in 1877, had worked for some years as a time-keeper on the

Weaver Navigation in Cheshire. He was there when Alexander Thompson, who was a journalist first on the Radical *Manchester Examiner* and then on Hulton's *Sporting Chronicle*, met him and promptly recognized his abilities. When Hulton bought *Bell's Life in London* he engaged Blatchford, on Thompson's recommendation, to write regular commentaries on current events ; and when *Bell's Life* failed, Blatchford was transferred to Hulton's new venture, *The Sunday Chronicle*. On these two papers, first as ' Nunquam Dormio ' and then as plain ' Nunquam ', Blatchford made his reputation as a writer.

But he was also, during these years on the Hulton press, becoming more and more interested in Socialism, and putting more and more of it into his writings. At last, Hulton revolted, and Blatchford, refusing to accept any restriction on what he wrote, resigned. Alexander Thompson, Francis Fay, known as ' The Bounder ', and several others went with him. With only a few hundred pounds between them they began *The Clarion*, sacrificing good jobs and high salaries in order to create a popular Socialist paper in which they could freely speak their minds.

The Clarion had its initial set-backs—plenty of them—but it succeeded. It grew into very much the best and most influential Socialist weekly the British Labour movement has yet produced. It annoyed many—for it would have no truck with teetotallers, vegetarians, apostles of the Nonconformist conscience, or solemn persons of any sort or kind. It was at once hard-hitting and ineradicably sentimental ; and before long Blatchford added to its sins by launching in it a frontal attack on all believers in original sin and in most brands of religious dogma. *The Clarion* stank in the nostrils of the ' unco guid ' as a wicked, roystering, atheistical, impudent, blasphemous, god-forsaken horror of a paper. But it sold ; and, in addition to getting a big circulation, it gathered round itself and round the personality of Robert Blatchford a band of devoted propagandists who presently set up all manner of *Clarion* auxiliary organizations and made of it a movement as well as a paper.

Before long Clarion Vans were touring the country with

Socialist missionaries carrying the Socialist message to townsmen and villagers alike ; Clarion Cycling Clubs were making the new vogue of the bicycle a powerful instrument of Socialist propaganda as well as Socialist fellowship ; Clarion Cinderella Clubs were providing entertainment, without moral instruction, for the slum-children of the great cities (Blatchford had started these Cinderella Clubs in his *Sunday Chronicle* days, before *The Clarion* had begun). To become a ' Clarionette ' was not merely to read and appreciate the paper, but to enter into a new fellowship in which a common belief in Socialism formed the basis for having a high old time.

Blatchford, as a writer and as a man, had certain essential qualities which stamped themselves on the entire movement which he inspired. His sympathy with suffering was intense ; and at the same time he was one of the happiest people in the world. He had a deep belief in the fundamental niceness of the great majority of ordinary men and women. His feeling for the miserable took above all else the form, not of grieving with them, but of wanting to cheer them up ; and Socialism was, for him, a means of turning the ' Dismal England ' which he saw around him into a ' Merry England ' which could be easily realized if only other people could be made to see that Socialism was the only decent, kindly, human solution of the problem of unnecessary suffering. He had, far beyond any other English writer, the power of making decent, ordinary people feel this as he felt it. He was interested in so many things that interested them, and could write about them so simply and directly, that he made friends of a large proportion of his readers, and the group that gathered round *The Clarion* used to talk and think of Blatchford and his fellow-contributors as if each week's issue had meant a personal visit from them. There had been nothing like this in Labour journalism before ; and there has been nothing since.

A little while before the foundation of *The Clarion*, while he was still contributing to *The Sunday Chronicle*, Blatchford had accepted an invitation from the Bradford Labour Union to contest one of the three Bradford seats as an independent Labour candidate. Ben Tillett, one of the leaders of the London Dock Strike, and at this time secretary of the Dockers'

Union, was to fight West Bradford, and Blatchford was to be his colleague in East Bradford. The Bradford Labour Union, which was soon to take a leading part in the creation of the Independent Labour Party, had been set up in May, 1891, after a struggle with the 'Lib.-Lab.' element in the local Trade Unions. Similar moves were being made that summer in a number of other areas. The Colne Valley Labour Union, established in July, 1891, adopted another leading 'New Unionist', Tom Mann, as its candidate; and the Salford Labour Electoral Association joined the ranks of the 'independents' in the following month. The London Trades Council meanwhile had set up a Labour Representation League of its own; and the Labour Church movement, founded by John Trevor in Manchester, began to spread to other centres, on a basis of ethical Socialism which attracted many recruits in need of a substitute for the orthodox Nonconformity from which they had broken away.

Blatchford, however, though he was in full sympathy with the movement for independent Labour representation, and indeed wished, as we shall see, to carry independence further than most of the adherents of the movement were prepared to go, was out of his element as a parliamentary candidate, and before the General Election of 1892 he had resigned and decided to devote his entire time to his journalistic concerns. He was soon much better employed in writing for *The Clarion* that series of letters to 'John Smith' which, on their appearance in book form in 1894, under the title of *Merrie England*, speedily became the most powerful instrument of Socialist propaganda in the industrial areas. *Merrie England* was published originally at one shilling, and of this edition 20,000 copies were sold—much to its sponsors' surprise. Pete Curran suggested reissuing the book at one penny, and risking a print of 100,000. In less than a year the sale rose to three-quarters of a million, and eventually to over a million—not counting the United States, where pirated editions are said to have sold even more widely. Translations soon appeared in a large number of languages; and even to-day, though much of the book is out of date, it remains one of the best pieces of Socialist propaganda in the world. Keir Hardie and the

Independent Labour Party were the principal organizers of British Socialism in the 'nineties ; but *The Clarion* and *Merrie England* did much more than any organization to spread Socialist ideas in the minds of the people.

Blatchford's Socialism had very little dogma about it. First and foremost, it was a protest against injustice and unnecessary suffering, based on the belief that all should have bread before any were allowed cake, and that there would be bread—and cake—for everybody if only the resources at men's command were sensibly used for the common benefit, and not misused to serve the purposes of the profit-makers. Like most Socialists, Blatchford was inclined to rate high the potential productive capacity of the modern world, and to make much play with the contention that capitalism was causing starvation in the midst of plenty. But he contrived to reinforce the argument with a direct personal appeal, and to make his readers realize not merely the abstract poverty of the bottom dogs as a class, but also the meaning of this poverty in terms of individuals, whose thwarted lives he feelingly described. In the 'eighties the Social Democratic Federation and the Socialist League had sought to capture the masses by converting them to Socialism as a doctrine of class-war. Blatchford and also, to a great extent, Hardie appealed to them rather in the name of human fellowship and decent feeling. In Great Britain the 'nineties were above all else the age of an ethical Socialism full of warm feelings of sympathy for the poor, and somewhat scornful of doctrines that could not be cast into the form of moral imperatives. ' Scientific ' Socialism did not appeal to Blatchford, or to Hardie. They wanted to make converts on the basis of human brotherhood rather than of the class-war—even though they recognized the class-war as a fact.

Undoubtedly, this appeal was at that time the most likely to bring over large sections of the British workers from their traditional allegiance to Gladstonian Liberalism. As followers of the great Mr. Gladstone, they had been nourished on moral inspirations and high-sounding phrases ; and they were gradually finding out that these phrases meant nothing in terms of their everyday material needs. They were ready to

be weaned from a Liberalism that had discarded Chamberlain's social Radicalism together with its author ; but they were not ready to do without the feeling of virtue with which Gladstone had held them comforted for the lack of more substantial advantages. They were in many cases still closely attached to one or another Nonconformist congregation ; and even when they became sceptical of the dogmas of the Churches they were apt to feel cold and uncomforted unless they could find some spiritual substitute. This mood accounts for the rapid spread of John Trevor's Labour Church movement, which became organized in 1893 in the Union of Labour Churches. But it accounts also for much of the difference in tone between the Social Democratic Federation and the I.L.P., and between *Justice*, the S.D.F.'s organ, on the one hand, and Blatchford's *Clarion* and Keir Hardie's *Labour Leader* on the other. Even when Blatchford had published *God and My Neighbour* and other writings denounced by the orthodox as rank atheism and blasphemy, he held his followers largely because he was able to inspire them with a lively faith in the righteousness of Socialism.

This applies to the Trade Unionists, who were being brought over in large numbers to the new gospel. The early 'nineties were a period of widespread industrial unrest. The trade boom which had begun in 1888 held good through the next three years, during which wage advances and other concessions were won in one trade after another. Towards the end of 1891 the tide was beginning to turn ; but the great lock-out of the Lancashire cotton spinners in 1892, a retaliation by the employers following upon a local strike at Stalybridge late in the previous year, ended in a substantial victory for the workers. The Durham miners, striking against a wage-reduction as trade fell off, fared worse, and were beaten ; and a strike of the Tyneside engineers over a question of demarcation was also lost. By November, 1892, the cotton spinners were out again, against a reduction in wages ; and this time they were forced to accept a compromise.

The following year, 1893, was full of strikes and lock-outs. The Hull dockers were out for nearly seven weeks in unsuccessful resistance to the employers' attempt to weaken their

Union by introducing a system of registered " free labour ". The Dundee jute works struck successfully against an attempt to cut wages. Thc Miners' Federation brought out 300,000 men in a strike that lasted nearly four months, and ended in the resumption of work at the old rates and the establishment of a Conciliation Board for the future regulation of wages. The Welsh and Scottish miners, still outside the bargaining area of the Federation, were less fortunate. A strike of 90,000 South Wales miners against the sliding scale ended in defeat; and the Scottish miners struck vainly for an advance. Only in Cumberland did the miners win an advance by strike action, despite the downward movement of trade.

Meanwhile unemployment, which had fallen to about 2 per cent in 1889 and 1890, among the members of the Trade Unions making returns, rose in the three following years to 4, 6, and 8 per cent, and stayed bad until the trade revival of 1896. *The Clarion* and the Independent Labour Party were both losers during this period of recession, when the Trade Unions were fast shedding a part of the membership they had gained during the boom, and the old ' Lib.-Lab.' leaders were prophesying, not without satisfaction, that such mushroom growths as the Dockers' and Gasworkers' Unions would speedily perish. The conditions were thus unfavourable to the rapid growth of the Socialist movement; for the depression never reached a depth at all comparable with that of the mid 'eighties and, with the cost of living still on the decline until 1896, real wages for those in employment were rising in spite of the state of trade. There was neither the optimistic mood of 1889 nor the hunger revolt of 1886 to carry the movement forward.

Nevertheless, it made rapid progress. In 1892 the Liberal Party, with its ' Newcastle Programme ', made a bid to recapture working-class support; and in the General Election of that year Gladstone came back to power for the last time with the narrow majority of 40, including the 81 Irish Home Rulers and the three Labour men elected as ' Independents '. Politically, the Newcastle Programme was not unsatisfactory to the ' left '. It included the abolition of plural voting (' one man, one vote ') and the institution of triennial Parliaments,

as well as Church disestablishment in Wales and Scotland. But economically it promised nothing except a reform of the law relating to Employers' Liability and some further taxation of the rich. It referred vaguely to hours of labour, but made no promise of the eight hours day, then foremost among the demands of the New Unionists. The chief plank in the Liberal platform was still Home Rule ; and to this the Independents were asked to subordinate their claims to domestic reform.

We have seen already how the ' Lib.-Labs.' and the Independents fared at the General Election of 1892. Of the three men elected to Parliament on the Independent ticket, John Burns was already drifting away towards the Liberals, and Havelock Wilson, the Seamen's leader, though he won his seat at Middlesbrough as a third-party candidate, never associated himself with the Socialist movement. Keir Hardie, after his offer to accept Burns as leader if he would take a militant line of independence in the House of Commons had been refused, stood practically alone as the representative of the new ' left '. To him the scattered local associations which had been formed up and down the country in order to promote the cause of independent Labour representation looked for leadership ; and when at the Trades Union Congress of 1892 the independents gathered to consider what their next step should be, Hardie was their natural rallying-point. He convened the meeting, and presided over it ; and the immediate outcome was the decision to summon at Bradford for January of the following year a national conference of delegates from the local bodies with the object of establishing a Labour Party.

CHAPTER XI

THE INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY

The Bradford Conference of 1893—The Election of 1895

THE Conference which met at Bradford on January 13th and 14th, 1893, and there founded the Independent Labour Party, was presided over by Keir Hardie. It consisted of 124 delegates, of whom the majority came from the industrial North. Yorkshire sent 48 delegates, from 46 organizations, nearly half from Bradford and its immediate neighbourhood. Lancashire and Cheshire had 32 delegates, from 30 societies, fairly well distributed over the industrial area. Twelve out of the 32, however, were from Manchester and Salford, and most other places were content with a single delegate. Cumberland and the North-East Coast supplied 9 delegates, from as many organizations; for though one organization sent 3 delegates, there were other delegates who represented more than one society. Scotland had 11 delegates, mostly from branches of the Scottish Labour Party.

In comparison with the North, the Midlands were poorly represented by only 6 delegates from 5 towns. London had 15 delegates, from 14 bodies; and the whole of the rest of Southern England sent only 3, from Plymouth, Chatham, and the Medway Trades Council. There was not a soul from any part of Wales or from Ireland.

These numbers included a few S.D.F. branches, mostly in Lancashire. They also included the Fabians, who numbered a baker's dozen, mostly from local Fabian Societies in the North of England. The parent Fabian Society, which sent two delegates, announced at the outset that it did not propose to sink its identity in the new party, although it favoured its establishment. Bernard Shaw explained on behalf of the Fabians that they were a society of Socialists, who meant to

permeate with Socialist ideas not only the Trade Unions, but anyone they could get to attend to them. He himself had taken some pains to get inside a Liberal Association for the purpose of infecting it with Socialist ideas ; and he had no intention of abandoning this point of vantage. The delegates should by all means establish their new party ; and the Fabian Society wished it well. But that did not mean that the Society was prepared to merge itself in it as a body. Let the Independent Labour Party get on with its work : the Fabian Society, in friendly co-operation, fully intended to get on with its own.

This was said after, at the very beginning of the Conference, the credentials of the Fabians had been challenged by some of the delegates. They were allowed to take their seats ; but when the time came for the election of the Executive they decided to stand aside. The Fabian Society was not prepared to abandon its tactics of permeation ; it would not give the required pledge to cease from association with any other party.

In addition to Keir Hardie and Bernard Shaw, the Conference included a good many delegates whose names were, or were to become, famous in Labour history. Bradford's representatives included Ben Tillett and F. W. Jowett, and those of Leeds, J. L. Mahon and Tom Maguire. Ben Turner came from Batley, and Allen Gee, who with him built up Trade Unionism in the woollen industry, from Huddersfield. James Sexton attended from Liverpool, and the large Manchester delegation included Blatchford, Fred Brocklehurst, and John Trevor, the founder of the Labour Church. The Scots sent, in addition to Hardie, Robert Smillie and William Small of the Miners, and George Carson, who was for a long time Secretary of the Glasgow Trades Council and the Scottish Trades Union Congress. From London came Marx's son-in-law, Edward Aveling, and from Croydon Pete Curran, of the Gasworkers' Union. Plymouth sent H. Russell Smart. Neither Ramsay MacDonald nor Philip Snowden, however, was connected with the I.L.P. at its inception ; and of other leading figures Tom Mann, J. R. Clynes, and Bruce Glasier all made their first appearance as delegates only in 1894.

The report of the proceedings at Bradford suggests that the

Conference was by no means clear about its intentions, except that it had assembled in order to bring into being a national movement for the independent political representation of Labour. The main points at issue were, first, whether the new party was to be a mere federation of affiliated societies or a national organization in which the constituent bodies would be asked to merge their identity, and secondly, what the political platform of the movement was to be. The first of these questions raised an issue of fundamental importance. Was the Independent Labour Party to be made up exclusively of local associations or branches, each concerned with promoting the cause of independent Labour representation in its own area, or was it to set out in addition to secure Trade Union affiliations? If Trade Unions or Trade Councils were to be asked to join, there could clearly be no question of complete amalgamation; for such bodies could not sink their identity in a political party. On the other hand, if only the local political bodies were to be brought together, amalgamation rather than mere federation seemed the appropriate method.

In practice, though Trade Unions as well as Trades Councils had been invited to attend the Conference, no national Trade Union had responded to the request, and there were only a handful of delegates from Trades Councils and Trade Union branches. The great majority of the delegates came from local 'Independent Labour Parties', 'Labour Unions', or similar bodies of an essentially political character. Some of the leaders, however, notably Hardie himself, were actively engaged in an endeavour to persuade the Trade Unions and the Trades Union Congress to take up independent Labour representation; and to these it seemed essential to hold the door open to Trade Union affiliations. For this reason, and because some of the local societies were reluctant to give up their autonomy, the conference voted in favour of federation, rather than amalgamation, against a minority of only two votes. But fate plays strange tricks with conference resolutions when they fail to fit the facts. Within a few months of the Bradford meeting the I.L.P. had become in effect a unified body made up of local branches, and the idea of securing Trade Union affiliations had been virtually given up. When

at last the Trades Union Congress did decide, in 1899, to support independent Labour representation, there was no question of the Trade Unions joining the I.L.P. Instead, the I.L.P., the S.D.F. (which soon seceded), and the Fabian Society, together with the Trade Unions, became affiliated organizations in a new federal body, the Labour Representation Committee, which thereafter grew into the Labour Party, still preserving its federal character. The I.L.P. at Bradford was still dreaming of becoming the federal Labour Party : in the event, it speedily abandoned this objective by becoming a unified society with local branches, instead of a federation of autonomous bodies. It acquired by this change greater strength and coherence in propaganda ; but it surrendered the possibility of bringing the Trade Unions into its ranks.

The second issue, that of programme, was even more fundamental. Was the I.L.P. to be merely an association for promoting the election of independent Labour candidates, or was it to take its stand on a definite programme of demands? Furthermore, if it was to have a programme to which its candidates would be committed, how Socialist was that programme to be? Should it be limited to claims for immediate reforms, such as the eight hours day, or should it include also a declaration of ultimate faith and objective?

The first battle over this question of objective arose when two Scottish delegates, George Carson and Robert Smillie, moved and seconded that the new organization be called " the Socialist Labour Party ". This was strongly opposed by Ben Tillett, who said that he wished

> to capture the Trades Unionists of this country, a body of men well organized, who paid their money, and were Socialists at their work every day, and not merely on the platform, who did not shout for blood-red revolution, and when it came to revolution sneaked under the nearest bed. . . . With his experience of Unions, he was glad to say that if there were fifty such red revolutionary parties as there were in Germany, he would sooner have the solid, progressive, matter-of-fact, fighting Trades Unionism of England than all the hare-brained chatterers and magpies of continental revolutionists.

Whether or not Tillett's speech convinced the delegates, an amendment that the name should be " The Independent

Labour Party " was carried by a very large majority on a show of hands.

A Lancashire Fabian delegate, S. J. Bardsley, next moved " That the object of the Independent Labour Party shall be to secure the collective and communal ownership of all the means of production, distribution, and exchange." For this, J. L. Mahon of Leeds, who had been active earlier in the Socialist League, proposed to substitute a mere declaration " That the objects of the I.L.P. shall be to secure the separate representation and protection of Labour interests on public bodies ". This amendment having been defeated by 91 votes to 16, the Conference adopted the resolution with the omission of the words " and communal ", which were felt to savour too much of Anarchism or voluntary Co-operation. Thus the I.L.P. became at the outset definitely Socialist in its declaration of aims.

Having reached this point, the Conference proceeded to appoint a Committee to draw up a programme for presentation to it on the following day. Edward Aveling duly presented the Committee's report, and after considerable amendment it was adopted. Its principal demands included the legal limitation of the working day to eight hours, the abolition of overtime, piecework and child labour, public provision for the sick, the disabled, the aged, the widows and the orphans out of the proceeds of a tax on unearned increment, free unsectarian education up to the Universities, the provision of properly remunerated work for the unemployed, and, on the motion of Bernard Shaw, " the abolition of indirect taxation, and the taxation, to extinction, of unearned incomes ". The Socialist motion carried on the previous day was also incorporated in the programme.

In addition to these demands, the drafting Committee had drawn up a political section of the programme including adult suffrage, secret ballot, public payment of members and of election expenses in both national and local elections, shorter Parliaments, the referendum, and the abolition of the Monarchy and the House of Lords. But the Conference proceeded to sweep all these proposals aside in favour of a simple declaration that " the I.L.P. is in favour of every proposal for

extending electoral rights and democratizing the system of government ". The ground given for this change was that the Conference did not wish to give the appearance of stealing planks out of other parties' programmes ; but it seems more probable that the delegates chose an easy way of evading a direct pronouncement on the question of the Monarchy.

The programme having been thus settled, the Conference came to a more difficult matter. F. W. Jowett, of Bradford, moved that " no member of any organization connected with the Liberal, Liberal Unionist, Irish Nationalist, Conservative, or any other party opposed to the principles of the I.L.P. shall be eligible for membership ". This was at once attacked on more than one ground. It was contrary to the principle of local autonomy which the Conference had endorsed by voting for federation instead of amalgamation. It was impracticable in view of the close ties existing in many places between the Trade Unions and the Liberals. It was unwise—this from Bernard Shaw—because of the desirability of continuing the policy of permeation.

> He himself was on the executive of a Liberal Association, and he had taken some trouble to get the position in order to push Labour interests there. He intended to stick to it, and most of the energetic men whom he knew in London had done the same thing, and had found that there was a great deal of good to be done thereby.

An amendment was finally carried, by 60 votes to 17. It laid down that " no person opposed to the principles of the party shall be eligible for membership ". It was further agreed that each affiliated organization could take such steps as it thought fit to carry out the principle of the resolution.

But there was yet another hurdle. The Manchester delegates moved what was afterwards known as the ' Fourth Clause '. Their proposal was " That all members of the I.L.P. pledge themselves to abstain from voting for any candidate for election to any representative body who is in any way a nominee of the Liberal, Liberal Unionist, or Conservative Party ". This would have meant in the great majority of cases the complete disfranchisement of the I.L.P.'s membership ; for the young party could not hope at first to put any consider-

able number of candidates into the field. The Bradford delegates countered with a proposal that, in the absence of an I.L.P. candidate, members should act as directed by their local branch ; while James Sexton, of Liverpool, proposed to make the original resolution optional for each branch. Robert Blatchford spoke strongly for the resolution.

> He regarded Liberals and Tories as the enemies of the people. When he said a man was his enemy he meant he hated him, and would fight him to the death. . . . He considered it a stain on the Labour Party to have any dealings with the Liberals. He would as soon have dealings with the devil.

After Sexton's proposal had been ruled out of order, the Bradford amendment was carried by 62 votes to 37 ; but the strength of the minority was a clear indication of further troubles to come.

In fact, the 'Fourth Clause', energetically advocated by *The Clarion*, became a 'hardy annual' at subsequent conferences of the I.L.P. It was defeated by 53 votes to 34 in the following year (1894), and by 48 votes to 21 in 1895. Later, the Annual Conference developed the habit of carrying the previous question ; but the proposal was not buried until the foundation of the Labour Representation Committee in 1900, after which the question of Labour independence necessarily assumed a different form.

The inaugural Conference of 1893 left the Independent Labour Party still in many respects uncertain of its course. It was not clear whether it was meant to be a loose federation of bodies which were prepared to affiliate to it on the basis of its programme, or a unified society within which the branches were to retain a considerable amount of local autonomy. The National Administrative Council, interpreting the ambiguous decisions of the Conference, came down decisively on the side of unification by refusing to accept the affiliation of any bodies except such as were prepared to convert themselves into branches of the I.L.P. This disposed both of the S.D.F. branches and local Fabian Societies which had been represented at the inaugural Conference and of any question of Trade Union or Trades Council affiliations. Despite the vote of the Conference for federation as against amalgamation,

the I.L.P. had become by 1894 a unified society with branches; and the delegates who attended its second Annual Conference came exclusively from what were in effect branches, though some of them, such as the Colne Valley Labour Union, still retained their distinctive names. This meant that, if a Labour Party including the Trade Unions were to be brought into existence, the I.L.P. could not itself become that party. The first N.A.C. sacrificed comprehensiveness in order to gain cohesion. It made the I.L.P. a Socialist Society based on individual membership, and not a federation which could enrol any body favourable to the idea of independent Labour representation.

This decision was doubtless prompted in part by fear that the 'Lib.-Labs.' might infiltrate into the I.L.P., as they had into earlier organizations formed for the purpose of getting Labour representatives elected to Parliament and to the local councils. Very early in the life of the new body, an opportunity arose for showing its implacable hostility to the most hated of the Trade Union leaders of the old school. Henry Broadhurst, narrowly defeated at West Nottingham in 1892, attempted to re-enter Parliament in the following year when a vacancy occurred at Grimsby, a seat captured by the Liberals at the General Election. The I.L.P. was not strong enough to put up a candidate of its own; but it threw its weight against Broadhurst, and claimed the credit for his defeat by E. Heneage, the former Liberal-Unionist member, who had been beaten in 1892. Broadhurst got back to the House of Commons in 1894 as one of the two members for Leicester; but on that occasion too the I.L.P. entered the field against him, running Joseph Burgess in the double by-election against Broadhurst, another Liberal, and a single Tory. In this contest Burgess polled 4,402 votes, against 9,464 for Broadhurst, 7,184 for Hazell, his Liberal colleague, and 6,967 for the Conservative, J. F. L. Rolleston. Burgess stood again, with the same opponents, at the General Election of 1895; but he polled rather worse—4,009 to Broadhurst's 9,792, Hazell's 7,753, and Rolleston's 7,654. It can hardly have consoled Burgess that these pioneer fights prepared the way for Ramsay MacDonald, who, after an unsuccessful contest in 1900, won a

seat at Leicester in 1906, with Henry Broadhurst as his colleague in the representation.

The development of the I.L.P. during its early years is not very easy to trace. There had been 124 delegates at the Bradford Conference of 1893; but there were only 93 at Manchester in 1894, 89 at Newcastle in 1895, and 101 at Nottingham in 1896. In the following years the attendance averaged between 90 and 100, falling to 75 in 1900, the year of the inauguration of the L.R.C. Conference. Representation, however, was not a complete guide to membership; for many of the smaller branches could not afford to send a delegate. But the claim, made at the 1894 Conference, that the I.L.P. had already 400 branches, was certainly a gross exaggeration, as was Keir Hardie's declaration in 1895 that it had 35,000 members. This claim was reduced to 20,000 by the Council of the Party in 1896; and in 1899 it appeared that there were 89 paying branches, and that the branches actually represented at the Conference had paid dues on only 5,500 members, estimated to represent an actual membership of about 11,000, exclusive of members in branches which had sent no delegates. Clearly the I.L.P. had in these years no clear notion of what its real membership was; but it seems evident that it had made no great headway since its foundation.

What counted was, however, much less the number enrolled as members than the activity which they displayed, especially in local affairs and in the promotion of independent Labour candidates for Parliament. In this latter field no general opportunity of testing the new party's strength arose until the General Election of 1895; but in the meantime there were by-elections to be considered. In 1893, in addition to denouncing Henry Broadhurst at Grimsby, the I.L.P. was faced with the prospect of a contest at Accrington, where the local branch had a candidate in the field. But the branch was not strong, and the candidate had to be withdrawn. In the following year, however, the I.L.P., in addition to putting up Joseph Burgess against Broadhurst at Leicester, ran Frank Smith in the Attercliffe division of Sheffield, securing 1,249 votes against 4,486 for the Liberal and 3,495 for the Conservative in a traditionally Liberal seat. Moreover, in Bristol

East, which Havelock Wilson had already fought as a third-party candidate in 1890, the I.L.P. gave its support to Hugh Holmes Gore, a well-known local solicitor connected with the Bristol Socialist Society and with Christian Socialism. Gore, who had only a Liberal—Sir W. H. Wills—against him, very nearly got in, polling 3,558 votes to his opponent's 3,740. The I.L.P., however, had at this time little strength in Bristol, where the local Socialist organization was active and preferred to keep itself independent of both the S.D.F. and the I.L.P.

In 1895 came the General Election. The I.L.P. was then able to put 28 candidates in the field and to secure 44,594 votes—an average of 1,592. It could not, however, win a single seat : even Keir Hardie was beaten in South West Ham by the Conservative whom he had defeated in 1892. There was no Liberal candidate ; and Hardie lost by 4,750 votes to 3,975, on a reduced poll.

This result was probably not unconnected with the tactics of the party at the election. Under the constitution, the policy to be followed at a General Election had to be settled by a special Conference of delegates. This Conferenee decided that only avowed Socialists should receive its support, i.e. its own candidates and those of the Social Democratic Federation, which had only four men in the field. Moreover, by 104 votes out of 115 the Conference recommended that I.L.P. members should abstain from voting in all other constituencies ; and the 'Fourth Clause' thus became, for this occasion, the party's official policy. This decision probably induced Liberals to withdraw their support from Keir Hardie, and thus caused his defeat.

The twenty-eight I.L.P. candidates who went to the poll in 1895 included, besides Hardie, many names later famous in the movement. Ramsay MacDonald was at the bottom of the poll at Southampton, where there were five candidates for the two seats—two Tories, one Liberal and a 'Lib.-Lab.', as well as MacDonald. Ben Tillett again fought West Bradford, getting 2,264 votes against the Liberal's 3,471 and the Conservative's 3,936—a rather worse result than that of 1892. In Colne Valley, Tom Mann polled 1,245 to the Liberal's 4,276 and the Tory's 3,737. G. N. Barnes (Rochdale), S. G. Hobson

(East Bristol), Robert Smillie (Glasgow, Camlachie), Pete Curran (Jarrow), Dr. Pankhurst (Manchester, Gorton), James Sexton (Ashton-under-Lyne), and Joseph Burgess (Leicester—against Broadhurst) were among the other defeated candidates.

The four S.D.F. candidates included H. M. Hyndman at Burnley, who polled 1,498 votes against 5,454 for the Liberal and 5,133 for the Tory, and George Lansbury, at Walworth, who got only 203 votes, against 2,822 for the Tory and 2,269 for the Liberal. Earlier in the same year, Lansbury had fought Walworth at a by-election, getting 347 votes against 2,676 for the Tory and 2,105 for the Liberal—an unencouraging beginning to a long parliamentary career.

It is interesting to study the regional distribution of the Labour candidates at this election. Scotland had seven I.L.P. candidates, of whom six were in the Glasgow area and one, James Macdonald, in Dundee ; and there were two other Labour candidates—J. L. Mahon in Aberdeen North and A. E. Fletcher at Greenock. These two had straight fights—Mahon against a Liberal and Fletcher against a Tory ; but all the I.L.P. men were in three-cornered contests, and all were at the bottom of the poll. Nor did the 'Lib.-Labs.' achieve anything in Scotland : in fact, they did not put up even a single candidate.

South of the Border, the 'Lib.-Labs.' held their three seats among the Northumberland and Durham miners. Burt and Fenwick were again returned for Morpeth and Wansbeck, and John Wilson for Mid-Durham. In this area only one I.L.P. candidate went to the poll—Fred Hammill, who stood for the double constituency of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and came in at the bottom, the Tories winning both seats against the two Liberals and the Labour man. In Yorkshire the 'Lib.-Lab.' miner, Ben Pickard, held his seat at Normanton against a Tory ; and Havelock Wilson, by now classifiable as a 'Lib.-Lab.', was again returned for Middlesbrough—this time without Liberal opposition. A third 'Lib.-Lab.', Fred Maddison, was beaten by a Tory in Central Hull ; but the 'Lib.-Labs.' made no other challenge. In this area, however, the I.L.P. was active with seven candidates, fighting Dewsbury, Halifax, Colne

Valley, West Hull, South Leeds, Huddersfield, and West Bradford. In every case the Labour candidate came in last, but John Lister at Halifax and Ben Tillett at West Bradford both polled well, and most of the votes were at least respectable.

In Lancashire and Cheshire the I.L.P. had eight candidates, and the S.D.F. two ; and there were two 'Lib.-Lab.' miners, who were both beaten by Tories. Dr. Pankhurst, at Gorton, and J. Tattersall, at Preston, were defeated by Tories without Liberal opposition : the others came in last in three-cornered fights. In other parts of the country, there were only scattered Independent Labour candidates. Besides Hardie and George Lansbury, there was only one in London—W. Parnell, at Fulham—and he polled only 196 votes. The 'Lib.-Labs.', though more numerous, also fared badly in the Metropolis. John Burns safely held Battersea ; but Cremer, Howell, and Rowlands all lost their seats to Tories, and other defeats included Benjamin Jones, the Co-operator, at Woolwich, W. C. Steadman, a Fabian and General Secretary of the Barge Builders, at Hammersmith, L. M. Johnson, one of the seamen's leaders, at Gravesend, and Clem Edwards at Tottenham. In the Midlands, Henry Broadhurst was returned at Leicester, again defeating Burgess, who was the only I.L.P. nominee in the whole area. The one S.D.F. candidate in the Midlands was badly beaten at Northampton, where he shared defeat with Edward Harford, the 'Lib.-Lab.' Secretary of the Amalgamated Railway Servants. At Aston Manor another 'Lib.-Lab.' was beaten in a straight fight with a Tory. In Southampton, Ramsay MacDonald was heavily beaten in a contest with two Tories, who won both seats, a Liberal and a 'Lib.-Lab.' ; and in East Bristol, S. G. Hobson, in a straight fight with the sitting Liberal, fared much worse than H. H. Gore had fared in the by-election of the previous year. Joseph Arch, as a 'Lib.-Lab.', regained North-West Norfolk. Finally, in Wales, William Abraham was unopposed in the Rhondda, and at Swansea E. Hall Hedley came in second as an Independent in a three-cornered fight in which the Liberal was returned. The two Irish Labour-Nationalists, Austin and Crean, held their seats ; and Michael Davitt, of Land League fame, was elected for East Kerry. In all, the new Parliament

included nine 'Lib.-Labs.', of whom five were miners and three Irish Labour men. Before the next General Election three more 'Lib.-Labs.' were added to the group. In 1897 Fred Maddison won the Brightside division of Sheffield, and Sam Woods, the Miners' leader, was elected for Walthamstow; and in the following year W. C. Steadman got in for Stepney. There were thus twelve 'Lib.-Labs.', not counting the Irish, at the time when the Labour Representation Committee was founded; and of these twelve six were miners.

The results of the General Election were clearly by no means favourable to the Socialist cause. With Keir Hardie beaten, and Burns and Havelock Wilson now counting as 'Lib.-Labs.', the new movement was left without a single representative in Parliament. Nor was the propaganda of Socialism going too well up and down the country, hampered as it was by perpetual bickering between the adherents of the I.L.P. and the S.D.F. In some areas the local branches of the two Socialist bodies managed to get along together without much dispute; but in other areas there was perpetual trouble, and naturally the Executives of the two Societies were continually at loggerheads. At one Conference after another, the I.L.P. delegates instructed their leaders to open negotiations with the S.D.F. in the hope of achieving 'Socialist Unity'. But the S.D.F. leaders would consider nothing short of complete fusion of the two bodies, on the basis of a thoroughgoing Marxist programme; and the proposals of the I.L.P. for a looser federation met with no response. This did not prevent the local branches from working together in a number of areas at both national and local elections; but nationally no co-operation was achieved. The I.L.P. leaders mostly regarded the S.D.F. leaders as impracticable doctrinaires; and the S.D.F. leaders regarded the I.L.P. as tainted with compromise and as lacking any sound basis of Socialist doctrine.

In one field, however, the I.L.P. was making solid progress. Year by year it was getting its candidates elected in increasing numbers to serve on local government bodies. By 1900 it was able to record that it had among its members serving on such bodies 63 Town Councillors, 4 County Councillors, 36 Urban and 3 Rural District Councillors, 16 Parish Councillors, 8

Citizens' Auditors, 51 members of Boards of Guardians and 66 members of School Boards. These local representatives had an important influence; and the Fabian Society, by feeding them assiduously with tracts and proposals for immediate social reforms, both supplied them with a workable programme and obtained a large hold on the minds of the rising men and women in the movement. Many of the local councillors of these years rose subsequently to positions of national importance; and in many instances local service was the stepping-stone to a seat in the House of Commons when the Labour Party made its effective start in 1906. In 1900, for example, Philip Snowden was a Town Councillor at Keighley and F. W. Jowett at Bradford. Robert Smillie was a Guardian at Larkhall, and Margaret Macmillan was on the Bradford School Board. Frank Smith was on the London County Council, and Patrick Walls, the Blastfurnacemen's leader, on that of Cumberland. In the field of Local Government, at any rate, the I.L.P. pioneers could feel assured that they were not labouring in vain.

It had, however, become plain within a few years of the inaugural Conference that there was no hope of the I.L.P. developing at all soon into a real Labour Party, with the mass support of the workers behind it. The Annual Report issued in 1900 could record only 51 branches, with under 4,000 members; and though it was stated that less than one-quarter of the branches had sent in any returns, it is to be supposed that the defaulters were mainly among the smaller and weaker groups. At any rate, only about 4,000 paying members were represented at this Conference.

It was clear that, in order to carry out the party's original aim of bringing the main body of Trade Unionists over to the cause of Independent Labour, it was necessary to adopt a different method. The Trade Unions themselves must be induced to take up Labour politics, in their collective capacity. There was, of course, nothing new about this notion. First the Labour Representation League of 1869 and later the Labour Electoral Association of the 'eighties had been inspired by the idea of collective Trade Union action in the political field; and year after year Keir Hardie and his colleagues had

been trying to induce the Trades Union Congress to start a parliamentary fund for independent Labour candidates. The I.L.P. leaders, in the first flush of enthusiasm after the Bradford Conference, may have dreamed for a while of their new party turning into the mass working-class party of their hopes. But they speedily realized that this would not easily come about, and that they must either induce the Trade Unions to throw in their lot with them or be content to build up very slowly a party based on individual membership on the continental Socialist model. As they were not prepared to wait, most of them preferred the shorter cut of a Labour Party based mainly on Trade Union affiliations, even though they realized that they could get such a party only by a considerable dilution of their Socialist objectives. They hoped that, if they could but get the Trade Unions to collaborate with them on a basis of independence of other parties, the rest of what they wanted would speedily follow. The Socialist tail would be strong enough to wag the Trade Union dog ; and before long the main body of Trade Unionists would be converted by the experience of collaboration to the Socialist faith.

Out of these hopes the Labour Representation Committee was born. How far they were fulfilled we shall be able to see as we trace its evolution from its humble beginning in 1900—the year of the " Khaki Election ".

CHAPTER XII

SOCIALISM AND THE TRADE UNIONS

The Trades Union Congress in the 'Nineties—The Formation of the Labour Representation Committee—The 'Khaki Election' of 1900

THE resolution which led to the establishment of the Labour Representation Committee was passed at the Trades Union Congress of 1899 by 546,000 votes against 434,000. It was moved by J. H. Holmes on behalf of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants and seconded by James Sexton, of the National Union of Dock Labourers, an old stalwart of the I.L.P. It was cautiously worded, and proposed no more than that a special congress of representatives from "Co-operative, Socialistic, Trade Union, and other working organizations" should be called in order to devise ways and means "for securing the return of an increased number of Labour Members to the next Parliament". Thus the resolution, though it invited the co-operation of the Socialist bodies, did not even declare explicitly in favour of independence as the basis of the Labour representation which it was designed to promote. It was so drafted that even a 'Lib.-Lab.' might have supported it, though the voting shows that few can have done so. The principal hostile speaker was Thomas Ashton, the Secretary of the Cotton Spinners, who described the proposal as impracticable.

Immediately before the resolution was taken, P. Vogel, of the Waiters' Union, and James O'Grady, of the Furnishing Trades Association, had proposed the institution by the Trades Union Congress itself of a compulsory levy of one-halfpenny per annum on the entire affiliated membership—the sum thus raised to be used for paying election expenses and also salaries on election to candidates who acted in accordance with the policy of Congress. Against this proposal Will Thorne moved

the previous question, and in face of this the resolution was withdrawn. The Socialists did not want a purely Trade Union scheme under the exclusive auspices of the Trades Union Congress. They wanted an independent party, or at least an independent group, on a basis which would include Socialists as well as Trade Unionists, and possibly Co-operators as well.

Before the Conference convened by the British Trades Union Congress had actually met, the Scots had launched an organization of their own on a basis very similar to that proposed for the L.R.C. In January, 1900, a Conference presided over by Robert Smillie, of the Scottish Miners, met at Edinburgh, and set up the Scottish Workers' Representation Committee, with the co-operation of the Scottish Trades Union Congress. It was a widely representative gathering, with 116 delegates from Trade Unions, 29 from Trades Councils, 28 from Co-operative organizations, 34 from I.L.P. branches, and 19 from branches of the S.D.F. Keir Hardie was present, and delegates from the I.L.P. headquarters attended with a watching brief. The main resolution was much more forthright than the corresponding resolution at the inaugural meeting of the L.R.C. It ran as follows :

> Recognizing that no real progress has been made with those important measures of social and industrial reform that are necessary for the comfort and well-being of the working classes, and further recognizing that neither of the two parties can or will effect these reforms, this Conference is of the opinion that the only means by which such reforms can be obtained is by having direct independent working-class representation in the House of Commons and on local administrative bodies, and hereby pledges itself to secure that end as a logical sequence to the possession of political power by the working classes.

The Scottish Conference, however, defeated a proposal that it should pledge itself to 'secure the nationalization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange '.

The Scots, in creating an organization of their own in advance of the meeting convened by the British Trades Union Congress, were probably actuated in part by nationalist feeling ; but they had other motives besides. The Scottish Miners, the strongest section of Scottish Trade Unionism,

was not committed to a 'Lib.-Lab.' policy like most of the Miners' Unions in England; and they were ready to join the S.W.R.C., and did in fact provide it with most of its strength. Moreover, there seemed to be good hope of bringing in the powerful Scottish Co-operative movement, which was much more Socialist and much less averse to political action than the parallel movement in England. In fact, these hopes did not come to much. The S.W.R.C. never amounted to much more than a political wing of the Scottish Miners. But it was launched with a fine flourish, and its existence was for some years a source of considerable annoyance to the L.R.C. leaders in England.

The wider Conference which arose out of the decision of the Trades Union Congress of 1899 was duly convened in February, 1900, in London. The Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, including as it did many who were hostile to the entire project, did not itself undertake the arrangements for the Conference, but left them to a committee on which the Socialist societies were strongly represented. Consequently, these bodies, especially the Independent Labour Party, were able to shape the proceedings pretty much as they desired. When the Conference met, there were delegates representing about half a million Trade Unionists, whereas the total combined membership of the three Socialist bodies—the I.L.P., the S.D.F., and the Fabian Society—was only a few thousands. Nevertheless, the Conference agreed to a form of organization which gave the I.L.P. and the S.D.F. two members each on the Executive Committee, and the Fabians one, as against seven for the affiliated Trade Unions and one for the Trades Councils, which were intended to serve as the local agents of the movement in conjunction with the branches of the Socialist bodies.

The 129 delegates, claiming to represent 568,000 organized workers, who met in London and formed the Labour Representation Committee held widely divergent views about the character and purposes of the new organization which they had met to found. Some of them wanted a federation which would confine itself strictly to promoting the election of working men to Parliament and to other public bodies, and

would refrain from sponsoring any nominee not of the working class. The first important division at the Conference was upon this question. R. W. Jones, of the Upholsterers' Union, moved, and Paul Vogel, of the Waiters' Union, seconded a resolution designed to get the Conference to decide " in favour of the working classes being represented in the House of Commons by members of the working class, as being the most likely to be sympathetic with the aims and demands of the Labour movement ". To this resolution G. N. Barnes, of the Amalgamated Engineers, moved, and John Burns seconded, an amendment in favour of " working-class opinion being represented in the House of Commons by men sympathetic with the aims and demands of the Labour movement, and whose candidatures are promoted by one or other of the organized movements represented at this Conference ". Burns, who had been one of the principal agents in procuring the exclusion of the Trades Councils from the Trades Union Congress in 1895, thus took by this time, in relation to political representation, the broader view. It was on this occasion that he made his famous speech saying that he was " getting tired of working-class boots, working-class trains, working-class houses and working-class margarine ". He believed the Labour movement had reached a stage at which its members should no longer be " prisoners to class-prejudice, but should consider parties and policies apart from class-organization ". The Socialists and the ' Lib.-Labs.' were, in fact, united upon this particular issue : neither group wanted, at this stage, a purely working-class political movement.

On this first trial of strength the voting was decisive. Barnes's amendment was adopted by 102 votes to 3, after it had been widened to include the Co-operative movement, which was not represented at the Conference, but was greatly desired as an ally by the sponsors of the new organization. The Trade Unionists who might have supported the notion of purely Trade Union representation were in fact mostly absent : those who had come to the Conference had come prepared to collaborate with the Socialists, including their middle-class adherents. They realized that to pass the Jones-Vogel proposal would mean wrecking the movement alto-

gether ; and accordingly they voted nearly unanimously for the amendment.

The most important division arose out of a proposal by James Macdonald, of the London Trades Council, one of the pioneers of the British Socialist movement in the 'eighties, to commit the new organization to a thoroughgoing Socialist policy and to the creation of a definite political party taking its stand on the doctrine of the class war. He moved that the workers elected to Parliament under the auspices of the new body should form a distinct party separate from the capitalist parties, " based upon the recognition of the Class War, and having for its ultimate object the socialization of the means of production, distribution and exchange ". The new party was to " formulate its own policy for promoting practical legislative measures in the interests of Labour, and should be prepared to co-operate with any party that would support such measures or assist in opposing measures of an opposite character ".

This far-reaching resolution was met by Alexander Wilkie, of the Shipwrights' Association, with an amendment proposing that the L.R.C. should draw up a short and simple programme embodying only a few demands on which the main body of the workers was already in agreement, and that Labour candidates should be asked to endorse these demands, and to " agree to act together in the promotion and advancement of these questions ". Wilkie's amendment also favoured co-operation with other parties on the basis proposed in the resolution ; but he urged that on questions outside the range of the agreed short programme each candidate should be left free to act as he thought best. Sexton, speaking as a Socialist, opposed James Macdonald's resolution, which was indeed regarded by the I.L.P. group as a wrecking proposal from the other side, since there was plainly no chance of securing its acceptance by most of the Trade Unions. Accordingly, the Macdonald proposal was duly voted down, and Wilkie's amendment was carried.

This, however, did not settle the matter ; for the I.L.P. and its friends could by no means have been satisfied with a body committed merely to common action on a limited number

of labour questions, and devoid of any power of concerted action upon other issues. Keir Hardie therefore moved the further amendment which was finally adopted, and became the basis on which the L.R.C. was founded. It ran as follows :

> That this Conference is in favour of establishing a distinct Labour group in Parliament who shall have their own Whips and agree upon their policy, which must embrace a readiness to co-operate with any party which, for the time being, may be engaged in promoting legislation in the direct interest of Labour, and be equally ready to associate themselves with any party in opposing measures having an opposite tendency ; and, further, members of the Labour Group shall not oppose any candidate whose nomination is being promoted in terms of Resolution I. [I.e. the resolution carried earlier against the Jones-Vogel proposal.]

Wilkie having withdrawn his own proposal in favour of Hardie's, the Conference proceeded to carry the latter without dissent. By refraining from pressing for the creation of a Labour Party in the full sense of the term, Keir Hardie and his friends appeared to have got the substance of what they wanted. There was to be an independent group, which would prevent L.R.C. Members of Parliament from identifying themselves with the Liberal Party ; but collaboration with the Liberals was not excluded, and the L.R.C. was not in any way committed to Socialism, but only to common action on a Labour programme of which the content was still undefined. In effect, the main body of the Socialists thought it worth while not to insist on their Socialism, in the hope that, having once brought the Trade Unions to accept independent political action, they would be able in due course to complete their victory by winning them over to a Socialist faith and programme.

It must be remembered that the Conference was being held in the middle of the South African war, which had deeply divided the Liberal Party. The Socialists in the I.L.P. and the S.D.F. were almost solidly hostile to the war, which was supported only by a section of the Fabians, and by Robert Blatchford and a part of his *Clarion* following—with the consequence that *The Clarion* lost much of its influence on the Socialist movement. Anti-war feeling led to a change of attitude among the Socialists towards the anti-war section of

the Liberal Party, and swept away much of the 'Fourth Clause' fervour of the left wing. Blatchford and *The Clarion* had been the most influential advocates of the 'Fourth Clause'; but a great many who had supported the demand for it now wanted to make common cause with the Radicals against the war.

This desire put the main body of Socialists in a mood to favour co-operation with "other parties", and their readiness to endorse such co-operation made it easier for many Trade Unionists to accept the alliance with the Socialists, not because the Trade Unions were at all solidly anti-war, but because it gave hope to the 'Lib.-Labs.' in their ranks that the L.R.C. would turn out in practice to be not an independent body, but a group working in alliance with the more progressive Liberals. In 1899 the "Labour" Members of Parliament had formed a group of their own, under the guidance of John Burns, Sam Woods of the Trades Union Congress, and Charles Fenwick, to act together upon Labour questions; and Burns's presence at the inaugural conference of the L.R.C. indicated that he had not given up hope of making it an instrument of 'Progressive' unity. On the London County Council, the main body of Labour men formed part of a Progressive *bloc*, which included such leading figures as Burns himself, Ramsay MacDonald, W. C. Steadman and, a little later, the Fabian leaders, Graham Wallas and Sidney Webb. This co-operation in municipal politics largely accounted for the strength of the feeling among London Socialists in favour of alliance with the Radicals—a feeling quite consistent with hostility to the older Trade Unionists who had completely identified themselves with Liberalism, and in no way antagonistic to the proposal to form a separate Labour Representation Committee, provided that its separateness did not amount to isolation.

There were thus many cross-currents of opinion on the question of Labour independence; and Hardie's proposal at the L.R.C. Conference was exactly designed to secure the widest possible support. The practical consequence of its adoption was that the deeper questions at issue were left unsettled. The L.R.C. took the field at the election of 1900

without a definite programme and without any decisive definition of its relations with Liberalism or of the obligations resting upon those who became candidates under its auspices. Only gradually during the following years were these fundamental issues dealt with as they arose practically, and had to be settled one way or another. They were indeed not completely settled until after 1918, when the collapse of the Liberal Party under the stress of war had given the Labour Party an altogether new position of parliamentary importance, and when the party's new constitution of 1918 had converted it from a mere federation of affiliated organizations into a national movement with Local Labour Parties as its branches throughout the country, side by side with its nationally affiliated Trade Unions and other bodies.

In 1900, the Trade Unions were by no means solidly anti-war. In 1899, indeed, the Plymouth Trades Union Congress had carried by show of hands a resolution of protest against the South African War ; but at the Huddersfield Congress of 1900 John Ward's anti-war resolution was carried only by a small majority. In the following year, at Swansea, Ward failed to carry the suspension of standing orders with a view to bringing forward a further anti-war resolution.

Meanwhile, the Labour Representation Committee, within a few months of its formation, found itself faced with a General Election, and with the need for fighting it under exceptionally unfavourable conditions. The Trade Unions which had joined the L.R.C. had for the most part taken no steps to put candidates into the field ; and consequently the main burden of the fight was bound to fall on the I.L.P., which was very short of funds. The S.D.F., which was shorter still of funds and also ill-equipped with suitable candidates and constituencies, hardly appeared at all, even Hyndman leaving the anti-war Liberal, Stanhope, a straight fight against the Conservative at Burnley. Moreover, war feeling was running high ; and nearly all the Labour candidates were strongly anti-war. In these circumstances it is not surprising that few seats were contested, or that only two Members were returned to the House of Commons under the auspices of the L.R.C. One of these two was Keir Hardie, who won a seat at Merthyr,

with D. A. Thomas (later Lord Rhondda), the anti-war Liberal coalowner, as his senior colleague. Hardie secured only 5,745 votes to Thomas's 8,598 ; but he easily beat the second Liberal, W. P. Morgan, who polled only 4,004. The Conservatives did not put even one candidate into the field.

The other successful L.R.C. candidate was Richard Bell, the Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, who was returned jointly with a Liberal, Sir Thomas Roe, for the double constituency of Derby. Roe polled 7,917, and Bell 7,640 ; and their two Conservative opponents polled respectively 7,389 and 6,776. Bell's Trade Union had played a leading part in bringing the L.R.C. into existence, by moving at the Trades Union Congress of 1899 the resolution proposing it. But Bell himself, though he fought under L.R.C. auspices, was much more a Liberal than an independent ; and before long he was to sever his connection with the new party and return to the Liberal fold.

As against these two successes the L.R.C. had to record many more defeats. The I.L.P. had nine candidates in the field, for ten constituencies ; for Keir Hardie fought Preston as well as Merthyr. At Preston he had only two Tories against him for the two seats ; but he lost heavily. Philip Snowden did rather better in a similar contest with two Tories in another double constituency, Blackburn. James Johnston was last in a three-cornered fight for the Ashton-under-Lyne seat. In South-West Manchester Fred Brocklehurst was beaten by a Conservative in a straight fight ; and at Rochdale Allan Clarke, put forward jointly by the I.L.P. and the S.D.F., got only 901 votes against the Conservative's 5,204 and the Liberal's 5,185—thus presenting the seat to the former. At Accrington, J. Hempsall, standing as a Socialist and not under the L.R.C., fared even worse. The only other Lancashire fight was at Gorton, where W. Ward came within a few hundred votes of victory as a Liberal-Labour candidate.

Thus, no Labour Member, and no 'Lib.-Lab.', was returned in the whole of Lancashire, though this was one of the areas in which the new movement was supposed to be exceptionally strong. In Yorkshire, also reputed an I.L.P. stronghold, only two I.L.P. candidates went to the poll—

F. W. Jowett at West Bradford and James Parker at Halifax. Jowett, in the constituency which Tillett had fought as third candidate in 1892 and 1895, was given a straight contest with the Conservatives, and was beaten by only 41 votes—4,990 to 4,949. At Halifax, where there were two seats, Parker had against him two Liberals and a Liberal-Unionist, who came in first, followed by the two Liberals. Parker's vote must have been made up largely of ' plumpers ' or of the second votes of Tories. In East Leeds, W. P. Byles, standing as a Radical-Labour candidate, divided the Liberal vote on the war issue. Of the ' Lib.-Labs.' Ben Pickard, the Miners' leader, held his seat against a Tory ; but Havelock Wilson was narrowly beaten at Middlesbrough in a straight fight with a Tory, and Fred Maddison lost the Brightside seat at Sheffield, which he had won by a narrow majority as a ' Lib.-Lab.' on A. J. Mundella's death in 1897. Pickard was thus left as the sole representative of any sort of Labour in Yorkshire. His seat was safe enough. Another Miners' leader, W. Parrott, won it by a very large majority on Pickard's death in 1904 ; and when Parrott died in 1905 Fred Hall, yet another miner, was returned unopposed.

On the North-East Coast the I.L.P. had not a single candidate, and the L.R.C. only one—Alexander Wilkie, of the Shipwrights, who fought the two-member constituency of Sunderland in half-partnership with a Liberal against two Conservatives, who won both seats. In this area, however, the three ' Lib.-Lab.' miners all kept their seats. John Wilson held Mid-Durham, and Charles Fenwick Wansbeck. At Morpeth, Thomas Burt was again opposed by Maltman Barry, formerly of the International Working Men's Association, but now a Conservative. Barry polled 2,707 to Burt's 3,117, whereas in 1895 their votes had been 1,235 and 3,404 —a change doubtless attributable to war feeling.

In the Midlands, the I.L.P. had but one candidate—Ramsay MacDonald, at Leicester, where he had against him for the two seats Henry Broadhurst, a second Liberal, and one Conservative. Broadhurst was again at the head of the poll ; but the Conservative won the second seat, followed by the Liberal, with MacDonald well at the bottom. Richard Bell,

as we have seen, won a seat at Derby under the auspices of the L.R.C.; but there were no other independents in the field throughout the Midlands. Two miners fought as 'Lib.-Labs.', Enoch Edwards at Hanley, and William Johnson at Nuneaton; and both polled reasonably well. J. V. Stevens, of the Tinplate Workers, stood for East Birmingham as a 'Lib.-Lab.', and was heavily beaten; but at Dudley, W. Belcher was only a few hundreds behind the Tory. Bell and Broadhurst were the only Midland M.P.s who could claim to represent Labour in any form.

In the London area there was no I.L.P. candidate at all. Will Thorne, of the S.D.F. and the Gasworkers' Union, fought Hardie's old seat, South West Ham, under L.R.C. auspices, and was beaten by 5,615 to 4,419 in a straight fight with a Conservative. George Lansbury, also of the S.D.F., fought his first contest at Bow and Bromley as a straight Socialist, and was beaten by 4,403 to 2,558. The 'Lib.-Labs.' held Battersea, where Burns scraped in; and they also won back Haggerston, where W. R. Cremer reversed his defeat of 1895 by the narrow majority of 24. But Sam Woods lost Walthamstow, which he had won in 1897. In addition, W. C. Steadman, who stood as a 'Lib.-Lab.' though he had presided over the L.R.C.'s inaugural meeting in February, lost Stepney, which he had won by a bare twenty votes in the by-election of 1898. Benjamin Jones, the well-known Co-operator, standing as a 'Lib.-Lab.', went down at Deptford. On the other hand, T. J. Macnamara, the 'Lib.-Lab.' teachers' candidate, won North Camberwell, but he was thereafter identified completely with the Liberal Party.

In Wales, besides Keir Hardie's victory at Merthyr, John Hodge, the leader of the Steel Smelters, fought Gower under the auspices of the L.R.C., polling well against a Liberal, with no Tory in the field. These were the only independents. William Abraham, of the Miners, held Rhondda as a 'Lib.-Lab.' by a huge majority; and at Denbigh District, Clement Edwards, a former coal miner who had become a barrister, was nearly elected, as a 'Lib.-Lab.' There were no other Labour or 'Lib.-Lab.' candidates throughout Wales.

In Scotland the field was even smaller, and the success nil.

The I.L.P. put up A. E. Fletcher, the Socialist journalist, in the Camlachie division of Glasgow, where he polled 3,107 against a Liberal Unionist's 4,345. William Maxwell, the leader of the Scottish Co-operators, fought another Glasgow division, Tradeston, against a Liberal-Unionist. Dr. G. B. Clark, who had sat for Caithness-shire as an Independent Liberal ever since 1885, was beaten by an official Liberal in a four-cornered fight.

That was all, unless account be taken of the Irish. In Ireland, neither Davitt nor Austin stood again. Crean was once more returned for South-East Cork ; and Michael Joyce, a pilot and a leader of the United Irish League, was elected for Limerick City.

Thus, in all, there were in the new House of Commons two L.R.C. Members—Keir Hardie and Richard Bell ; five Miners' Members—Abraham, Burt, Fenwick, Pickard, and Wilson ; three other 'Lib.-Labs.'—Broadhurst, Burns, and Cremer—or four, if Macnamara be included ; and two Irish Labour-Nationalists. Arch had retired from his Norfolk seat : Havelock Wilson, Maddison, Woods, Steadman, and Dr. G. B. Clark were all beaten.

In these circumstances, the 'Lib.-Lab.' group had been practically reduced to the miners. Broadhurst was completely and Burns increasingly identified with official Liberalism ; and Cremer was mainly concerned with questions of peace and international arbitration. The Trade Unions, except the Miners, were no longer identified with the Lib.-Lab.' cause ; for Burns, Broadhurst, and Cremer had all lost their official connection with Trade Unionism. The miners, however, remained ; and in 1901 the Miners' Group in Parliament was further consolidated when the Miners' Federation of Great Britain—including all the principal coalfields except Durham and Northumberland—decided to establish a central Political Fund of its own for the support of its candidates and Members —thus going beyond the L.R.C., which, for various reasons, had not yet taken this vital step.

Judged by the results of the General Election of 1900, the Labour Representation Committee seemed to have accomplished nothing, and the Socialists to have suffered a serious

setback. In 1895, though no I.L.P. member had been elected, there had been 28 I.L.P. candidates : in 1900 there were only 10. The S.D.F.'s four had shrunk to two ; and the L.R.C. had been able to place only three candidates in the field, apart from those put forward by the Socialist bodies. Even the 'Lib.-Labs.' had suffered a setback. The Miners had held the five seats secured in 1895, but had lost the seat which Woods had gained at a by-election in 1897. For the rest, Broadhurst and Burns remained, and Cremer had won back his old seat ; but Arch had retired, and Havelock Wilson, Steadman, and Maddison had been beaten. The results were no doubt attributable largely to the conditions of the 'khaki election' ; but the facts remained. The great Socialist campaigns of the 1890's had failed to make any substantial impression on the electorate : the main body of working men still consisted of Liberals and Tories, and there was a tendency, under war conditions, for the doubtful voters to rally to the Conservative cause.

In the light of the election results, contemporary opinion was not inclined to attach much importance to the decision of the Trade Union movement to enter the political field as the ally of Socialism. Ramsay MacDonald wrote later on that "for six years the party was allowed to grow in obscurity" ; and H. M. Hyndman and his colleagues in the S.D.F. regarded the poor results of the election as a meet retribution for the tactics of compromise which had been adopted at the inaugural conference. They were fond of referring to the L.R.C. as the "non-Socialist Labour Party" ; and it was no surprise when in August, 1901, the S.D.F. seceded from the L.R.C., and announced its intention of returning to the strait path of Socialist propaganda, untrammelled by political exigencies and compromises.

Well before this secession, *Reynolds' Newspaper* had been responsible for a new and rival attempt to rally the forces of the left. At a Democratic Convention called by W. M. Thompson, the editor of *Reynolds*, in October, 1900, the delegates launched a National Democratic League, with Thompson as President, Tom Mann as Secretary, and George Howell among the members of the Provisional Committee. John

Burns, together with Mann, took a leading part in the Convention; and the N.D.L. adopted a purely Radical political programme of electoral and parliamentary reform. It stood for adult suffrage, payment of M.P.s, the abolition of the House of Lords, and the rest of the traditional Radical demands. For a few years it rallied behind its considerable following. Mann, who had been recently engaged in organizing the Workers' Union as a more militant rival to Will Thorne's Gasworkers and General Labourers', brought in a section of the less skilled workers. Charles Duncan, the engineer who had been persuaded by Mann to become General Secretary of the Workers' Union, and John Ward, the Navvies' leader, who had been closely associated with Burns, represented this section. Robert Smillie, of the Scottish Miners, and A. E. Fletcher, who had been an I.L.P. candidate in Glasgow in 1900, also joined; and with them were associated such old 'Lib.-Labs.' as Charles Fenwick, Sam Woods, and George Howell. T. J. Macnamara was also an active member; and David Lloyd George, then known chiefly for his 'pro-Boer' speeches during the South African War, became Vice-President. When Mann left for Australia in 1901 Victor Fisher succeeded him as Secretary; and later John Ward became Chairman. The N.D.L. petered out after the General Election of 1906; but for a few years it seemed to many people a potential rival to the L.R.C.—an attempt to revive Radicalism on the old lines with Labour support, and to remove from the 'Lib.-Lab.' attitude the taint of merely passive subservience to the Liberal Party. In effect, the N.D.L. was an offshoot of the anti-war movement, which temporarily allied the left-wing Liberals with a section of the Socialists. When the war was over, and other issues became predominant, the N.D.L. melted away. But it, and the wider movement of which it was a symbol, left their mark on the General Election of 1906.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE

The Legal Challenge to Trade Unionism—The Taff Vale Judgment

RAMSAY MACDONALD, writing of the L.R.C.'s inaugural meeting in his book, *The Socialist Movement*, declared that "129 delegates met, some to bury the attempt in good-humoured tolerance, a few to make sure that burial would be its fate, but the majority determined to give it a chance". The L.R.C.'s chance came when, in the year after its inauguration, the House of Lords issued the famous Taff Vale judgment.

For this Judgment put the entire Trade Union movement in jeopardy. It had been generally supposed, ever since 1871, that the Trade Union Act of that year had given full protection to Trade Union funds against actions for damages arising out of industrial disputes. It was believed that a Trade Union as such could not be sued for damages, because the legislation of 1871 had deliberately refrained from making it a corporate body. So well accepted was this idea that when Beasley, the General Manager of the Taff Vale Railway Company, conceived the notion of suing the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants for damages arising out of a strike of the company's employees, he was strongly advised by his lawyers that he would be unlikely to succeed. Beasley persisted, in spite of this advice, and carried the case right up to the House of Lords, which gave judgment unanimously in his favour.

Briefly, what the Law Lords decided was, first, that a Trade Union could be proceeded against in a civil action, either directly in its registered name or by way of a representative action against its officers and trustees. It could be made to pay damages for a 'civil wrong' committed by any person or persons acting as its agents ; and it could also be restrained by a legal injunction from authorizing or committing any act

which the courts might hold to be " wrongful "—a conception extending far beyond acts made criminal by law, and opening the door wide to the exercise of judicial prejudice. This meant in effect that almost any strike might give rise to a successful action for damages, or, if an injunction had been granted, to proceedings for contempt of court, not merely against the officials or members of the Union responsible for the act adjudged " wrongful ", but against the Union itself.

In the Taff Vale case, the A.S.R.S. had to pay £23,000 in damages, and the legal expenses came to an even larger sum. Clearly, at this rate, Trade Unions could have no security against the confiscation of all their funds, including the sums required to meet claims for friendly and unemployment benefits. Nor could a Union protect itself even if its Executive took the extreme course of accepting total disarmament and refusing to authorize any strikes at all ; for the Law Lords had held that it would be liable for the acts of any of its agents, so that if a local branch struck in defiance of the Executive's orders, the liability would still remain upon the Union's funds. Moreover, there were other decisions of the courts under which such acts as objection to working with non-unionists, or to the employment of particular workers in particular craft processes, had also been construed as " wrongful " ; and in view of the Taff Vale decision it was clear that such matters might also give rise to actions against a Trade Union and to the exaction of damages at the expense of its funds.

There is no need here to go into the detailed circumstances of the Taff Vale strike, which, beginning as an unauthorized stoppage, had been subsequently recognized by the A.S.R.S. Nor is it necessary to describe the other leading cases—*Allen* v. *Flood*, *Quinn* v. *Leathem*, etc.—which had recently narrowed very seriously the rights which the Unions had believed themselves to possess. The plain fact was that the courts, even if their decisions were legally correct, were taking away from the Trade Unions powers which had been regularly employed since the 'seventies in the full belief of their legality, and were making the exercise of the rights of collective bargaining practically impossible. It was inevitable that Trade Unionists should arrive at the conclusion that these decisions were the

answer of the governing classes to the growth of the Trade Union movement and to the greater power and militancy which it had displayed since the Dock Strike of 1889. The 'Old Unionism' of the 'eighties had been too harmless to be touched; but no sooner did the miners, the textile operatives, and the less skilled workers attempt to assert their claims than the full force of legal oppression was directed against them, in spite of all their supposed gains in the great legal struggles of 1867–76.

The imperative need to secure a reversal by legislation of the effects of the Taff Vale Judgment and of other recent court decisions brought the Trade Unions into politics much more rapidly than any amount of persuasion by the Socialists could have done. It was a matter of life and death. The total Trade Union membership represented at the L.R.C.'s inaugural conference in 1900 had been about half a million; but in the first year the effective Trade Union membership was only 353,000. This rose to 455,000 in 1901, to 847,000 in 1902, and to 956,000 in 1903; and over the same period the number of affiliated Trades Councils rose from 7 to 76. The affiliated Socialist membership, on the other hand, declined owing to the secession of the S.D.F. It was 23,000 in 1900, and less than 14,000 in 1903, thus forming an insignificant fraction of the total. The Trade Union figures should be compared with the affiliated membership of the Trade Union Congress, which rose from a million and a quarter in 1900 to a million and a half in 1903, when the total membership of all Trade Unions was under two millions. The difference between the Congress membership and that of the Labour Party is accounted for mainly by the Miners, whose various Unions had a membership of over half a million in 1903.

We have seen already that in 1901 the Miners' Federation instituted a political fund for the return and maintenance of its own parliamentary representatives. Other Trade Unions speedily followed suit, as their leaders realized the implications of the Taff Vale Judgment, and set to work seriously to secure its reversal. This movement had its dangers as well as its advantages. It threatened a return to the system under which workmen would be returned to Parliament as representatives

of a particular Union, and not of a combined Labour movement. The Labour Representation Committee was faced with the danger that the co-ordinating control might slip right out of its hands, unless it could take steps to make itself more than a loose federation of affiliated bodies each acting on its own behalf.

At the second L.R.C. Conference, held at the beginning of 1901, the question of forming a central Parliamentary Fund was already under consideration. The Fabian Society had been strongly urging this course as the only means of making the movement a reality, and on its behalf S. G. Hobson pleaded with the delegates to start a central fund. The Executive of the L.R.C. favoured the proposal, and put forward a scheme largely modelled on that drawn up by the Fabians. But the I.L.P. delegates would have none of it, presumably because the I.L.P. leaders feared that, if the L.R.C. were to become a body capable of financing its own candidates, the I.L.P. might find itself squeezed out, or reduced to a quite subordinate place in the movement. Bruce Glasier, on behalf of the I.L.P., therefore joined forces with the lukewarm Trade Unionists to reject the proposal by 227,000 votes to 106,000. The S.D.F., which favoured the plan, then attempted to get a committee appointed with instructions to draw up a revised scheme ; but this too was defeated. The I.L.P. delegates next succeeded in carrying a resolution committing the L.R.C. to a broadly Socialist objective ; but the S.D.F.'s attempt to carry an amendment making acceptance of the doctrine of class-war a test question for candidates was rejected. These decisions were followed, later in the year, by the secession of the S.D.F. from the L.R.C.

This split was speedily followed by a quarrel over a by-election at Dewsbury in January, 1902. The Trades Council was proposing to run E. R. Hartley under L.R.C. auspices, with the support of the local I.L.P. But before he had been formerly adopted the S.D.F. rushed in with its own candidate, Harry Quelch, whom it flatly refused to withdraw in any circumstances. Hartley, who had polled 1,080 as a Labour candidate in 1895, was finally withdrawn, and Quelch went to the poll. He got 1,597 votes, against 5,669 for the Liberal—

Walter Runciman—and 4,512 for the Tory. The incident created much bad feeling ; but Quelch must have secured the greater part of the Labour vote. What had happened illustrated the weakness of the L.R.C. ; for the S.D.F. would hardly have been able to treat it so cavalierly if it had really commanded the backing of the Trade Unions.

Perhaps this incident had something to do with the changed attitude of the next L.R.C. Conference, held at Birmingham early in 1902. Pete Curran, of the Gasworkers—an old I.L.P. stalwart—moved that the L.R.C. should proceed to draw up a scheme for the raising of a parliamentary levy, and James Sexton, of the Dock Labourers, another leading I.L.P. figure, moved to add that the scheme should be placed before the Trade Unions. Both proposals were adopted, after a further amendment asking the Unions to agree to a levy of 1*s.* per annum for each member had been voted down.

The Newcastle Conference of the following year, 1903, saw the adoption of the scheme proposed on the instructions of the Birmingham Conference. The Executive's proposal that each affiliated body should contribute one penny a year for each member to form a Parliamentary Fund was carried. Arthur Henderson, of the Ironfounders, making his first important appearance in the national movement, proposed that the amount of the levy should be fourpence, arguing cogently that the penny would provide an altogether inadequate sum. Paul Weighill, on behalf of the Stonemasons, moved that the levy should be one shilling. But neither of these proposals found favour, the I.L.P. joining forces with most of the Unions to oppose any sum higher than one penny.

Out of this new fund it was agreed that the L.R.C. should pay the Members returned to Parliament under its auspices £200 a year ; and in connection with the new plan the Conference introduced the ' Party Pledge ', which bound candidates to agree to abide by the majority decisions of the L.R.C. group in Parliament, or to resign their seats. This resolution adopting the Pledge, soon to become a matter of importance in the Osborne Case, was carried by 501,000 votes to 194,000. It prohibited candidates from associating themselves with other parties, and, in conjunction with other decisions of the

Conference, went a long way towards making the L.R.C. a definite party.

It was still, however, a long way off the adoption of a party programme. A resolution by W. T. Gooday, of the Electrical Trades Union, proposing that the L.R.C. should incorporate in its basis the doctrines of the class-war and the socialization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, was voted down by 86 votes to 35, on a show of hands. Jack Jones, on behalf of the West Ham Trades Council, then moved a rather more moderately worded resolution, calling for a declaration that the L.R.C. stood for the overthrow of the capitalist system and, as its ultimate object, for the public ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. This was narrowly defeated, on a card vote, by 295,000 votes to 291,000. Jones then moved that the L.R.C. should proceed to draw up a programme embodying its essential demands ; but this was opposed by Keir Hardie as inexpedient, and was rejected in its turn. It was still impossible for the Socialists and the Trade Unions to agree upon a common programme, though they could work together (*pace* the S.D.F.) as long as they left their objects undefined.

Philip Snowden next moved that the L.R.C. Members of Parliament should constitute a separate group in the House of Commons. To this an amendment was moved in favour of inviting the 'Lib.-Lab.' M.P.s to join ; but the amendment was rejected, and Snowden's proposal was adopted.

But this time the L.R.C. contingent in the House of Commons had been reinforced by a new Member. Its first by-election had been fought at Wakefield in March, 1902, when Philip Snowden polled well in a straight fight against a Conservative. Then, in the summer, the elevation of Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth to the peerage created a vacancy at Clitheroe in Lancashire ; and David Shackleton, of the Weavers' Amalgamation, was promptly nominated as Labour candidate. The Liberals, who had held the seat, searched vainly for a candidate of their own ; and the Conservatives announced that they would not fight unless a Liberal were to stand. At the beginning of August Shackleton was returned unopposed.

Later in 1902 there were by-elections in the Cleveland division of Yorkshire and in Devonport; but in neither case did the L.R.C. feel strong enough to put a candidate into the field. Its next chance came when, early in 1903, Lord Charles Beresford resigned his seat at Woolwich. Will Crooks, who had been a 'Progressive and Labour' member of the London County Council for Poplar since 1892, and had played an outstanding part in local government work in both Poplar and the county, was nominated as L.R.C. candidate and elected by the handsome majority of 3,229 over his Conservative opponent, Geoffrey Drage of the Charity Organization Society. A few months later Arthur Henderson, who had been agent to the former Liberal Member, was elected for Barnard Castle in a three-cornered contest by the narrow majority of 47—leaving the Liberal at the bottom of the poll—after he had refused to be nominated himself as the Liberal candidate. Before this, at the Newcastle Conference, Henderson, as we have seen, had moved on behalf of his Union, the Ironfounders, for a higher levy towards the Parliamentary Fund. He had also been elected as Treasurer of the L.R.C., and had been actually adopted as a Labour candidate before the vacancy occurred—so that the allegations that he won the seat by treachery to his former Liberal employer are clearly baseless. He did, however, manage to bring over a large part of the Liberal Association in the division to the Labour cause; and he in Barnard Castle and Crooks in Poplar and Woolwich were pioneers in basing their campaigns on local Labour bodies with a wide membership paying direct contributions for the purpose of financing elections and maintaining a regular electoral machine. Burns had done this in Battersea in the 'nineties; but Crooks and Henderson were the first to use the method on behalf of the L.R.C.

Henderson, in his new position as Treasurer of the L.R.C., lost no time in putting his experiences as a Liberal election agent at its disposal. The month after his election to Parliament, the L.R.C. published a small book on *Organisation and the Law of Registration and Elections*, prepared by Henderson jointly with MacDonald. From that time onwards, Arthur

Henderson's influence was predominant in forming the organization and electoral machinery of the movement.

There were, however, serious difficulties in the way of efficiency in the local machinery. At the outset, the L.R.C., having no local organization of its own, had adopted the policy of employing the Trades Councils as its local agents, usually in collaboration with the local branches of the I.L.P. There developed, however, in an increasing number of areas local Workers' Election Committees, chiefly for the purpose of securing the return of Labour members to Town Councils and other local bodies. By 1906 these local L.R.C.s, called by various names, numbered nearly a hundred ; but they were left without any organic connection with the national L.R.C. The question of admitting them to affiliation came up first at the Newcastle Conference in 1903, when the Executive recommended and the delegates endorsed the refusal of affiliation, on the ground that the policy of the movement was to work through the local Trades Councils.[1]

There were two reasons for this attitude. The Trade Unions regarded the Trades Councils as preferable instruments, because they safeguarded the Trade Union character of the movement. From a quite different standpoint, the I.L.P. was jealous of the local L.R.C.s as potential rivals to its own branches and as possible means whereby the Radicals might capture the local machinery to the exclusion of Socialist influence. Accordingly, the local L.R.C.s remained unrecognized, though they became increasingly influential in the conduct of local government elections.

A further question which came up for discussion at the Newcastle Conference had to do with the position of the movement in Scotland. As we have seen, the Scots, instead of joining the L.R.C., had founded, under the auspices of the Scottish Trades Union Congress, a separate Scottish Workers' Representation Committee. This body had the advantage of the support of the Scottish Miners, and was therefore unwilling to range itself with the L.R.C., to which the Miners' Federation did not belong. At Newcastle, the L.R.C. Executive was instructed to negotiate with the Scottish

[1] This question is discussed more fully in Chapter XVIII.

Workers' Representation Committee with a view to co-ordination. But nothing much came of this. The Scots went into the General Election of 1906 as a separate body, almost completely dominated by the Miners. Outside the mining areas Labour organization in Scotland remained backward even in 1906.

Meanwhile, the Newcastle decisions, carrying the L.R.C. some distance towards the establishment of a real Labour Party, were provoking misgivings among Trade Unionists who either wanted to keep politics out of the Trade Unions or held to the old Liberal-Labour notions. At the Trades Union Congress of 1903, when a resolution endorsing the L.R.C.'s policy was proposed, the critics moved an amendment designed to secure that the L.R.C. should put forward no candidates who did not belong to the working class. This was defeated by 209 votes to 53, and support of the L.R.C. was carried by 200 votes to 82. An attempt was made to renew the struggle inside the Trades Union Congress in 1904 ; but Richard Bell, himself by then at loggerheads with the L.R.C. because of his support of Liberal candidates at by-elections, ruled as Chairman that resolutions dealing with L.R.C. policy were out of order, as the Congress had no control over what must be regarded as an " outside organization ". The Trades Union Congress thus officially washed its hands of the L.R.C., which was left to develop in its own way in complete independence of the body whose resolution of 1899 had led to its establishment.

Meanwhile, at the L.R.C.'s 1904 Conference, contribution to the Parliamentary Fund had been made compulsory on all affiliated bodies. At the same time, the clause adopted at Newcastle, whereby Members of Parliament were ordered to obey the decisions of the parliamentary group, or resign their seats, was repealed. Instead, the L.R.C. Executive was empowered to withdraw its endorsement from offending representatives, or to deal with the matter " in any other way they may deem advisable ". Thus, control was withdrawn from the parliamentary group and transferred to the Executive outside Parliament, subject of course to report to the Conference itself.

The following year, at the Liverpool Conference, the

advocates of a purely working-class party attempted to secure their object by a direct proposal to exclude the I.L.P. and the Fabian Society from membership. This was heavily defeated and an amendment in favour of admitting any approved Socialist body to affiliation was adopted in place of the provisions made for admitting the I.L.P. and the Fabian Society by name. Moreover, on Snowden's initiative, the Conference carried an amendment providing for strict independence of all other parties, against a proposal of the Boilermakers' Society allowing compromise in particular cases at the Executive's discretion.

All this time, there had been continued trouble over the question of independence. In 1902 and early in 1903 Richard Bell, though he was Chairman of the L.R.C., supported Liberal candidates in a number of by-elections in which no Labour candidates were in the field. In 1904 both Shackleton and Henderson, without appearing on Liberal platforms, spoke for Free Trade during by-elections in which Liberals were fighting Tories chiefly on the tariff issue. This conduct was censured by the L.R.C. Executive as liable to give rise to misunderstandings about the independence of the movement. But a much more serious issue had arisen at the beginning of 1904, over a by-election at Norwich, where G. H. Roberts, of the Typographical Association and the I.L.P., was Labour candidate against Liberal and Tory opponents. When the Liberal won, Richard Bell wired his congratulations to the victor. This episode, in flat violation of the decisions of the Newcastle Conference, caused the severance of Bell's connection with the L.R.C., which was thus reduced to four Members—Hardie, Shackleton, Crooks, and Henderson. At this level it remained until the General Election of 1906 brought to it a sudden and remarkable accession of strength.

Meanwhile, the Socialist Societies had not been prospering overmuch. The combined membership of the I.L.P. and the Fabian Society stood, in 1905, at 16,784, according to the figures published by the L.R.C. The Social Democratic Federation, after its secession, fell to internal quarrelling. In 1903 a part of its Scottish membership seceded and formed the Socialist Labour Party, on a basis adapted from the American

Socialist Labour Party founded by Daniel Deleon. The S.L.P., reacting against the compromise involved in parliamentary action, took the view that the workers' revolutionary struggle must be carried on primarily in the industrial field, and that the first task was to create an inclusive revolutionary Industrial Union. It attempted to found such a body on the model of the American Industrial Workers of the World, not however repudiating political action, but holding that it should be secondary to revolutionary industrial activity, and that Parliament should be used only as a platform for the spreading of Socialist ideas, and not as an instrument for effective reform. The S.L.P. did not secure a large membership ; but it became a body of some influence in the Clyde area, where it was later to furnish many of the leaders of the shop stewards' movement during the Great War, and thereafter to merge itself in the Communist Party of Great Britain.

This split in the S.D.F. was followed, two years later, by another. In 1905, a section of the members, chiefly in London, broke away under the leadership of Fitzgerald, and formed the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Equally with the S.L.P., this body denounced the compromising tactics of the S.D.F. ; but it drew a different moral. In its eyes, political action as practised by the other Socialist bodies was mere reformism ; but it was also of the opinion that Trade Union action was doomed to futility as long as the capitalist system remained in being. Strictly revolutionary political action alone would help the workers ; and the only activity that was justifiable under existing conditions was the persistent education of the working class for its revolutionary task. As there were no candidates worth voting for, the slogan of the S.P.G.B. was " Don't vote ".

These dissensions may appear to be of small moment ; but they were indicative of a growing dissatisfaction among the more advanced workers, especially as industrial action had been rendered almost impossible by the Taff Vale decision. From 1903 onwards political attention was diverted more and more to the Free Trade *versus* Protection issue. Joseph Chamberlain was making a great effort to capture working-class support for his tariff campaign ; and the independent

Labour men were being drawn closer to the Liberals by their common belief in Free Trade. The Conservative Government offered the workers nothing but the nugatory Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, giving local authorities permissive powers to set up Distress Committees for the relief of the unemployed and for the provision of work under conditions which the Trade Unions denounced as 'slave labour'. The L.R.C. seemed to be accomplishing nothing: how could it achieve anything in a House of Commons in which the Conservatives enjoyed a comfortable majority? Under these conditions the time drew near for an appeal to the country; and when, in 1905, A. J. Balfour resigned and the Liberals under Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman took office and promptly made arrangements for a General Election, the opportunity came at last and, thanks largely to Henderson's adroit manipulation in the constituencies, the L.R.C. was in a position to take the maximum immediate advantage of it.

CHAPTER XIV

THE COMING OF THE LABOUR PARTY

The Election of 1906—The Liberal-Labour Victory

At the General Election of 1900, the Conservatives had returned 334 M.P.s, and Chamberlain's Liberal Unionists 68, making a block of 402 Tories against 184 Liberals and 'Lib.-Labs.', 2 Labour Members, and 82 Irish Nationalists. This immense Tory majority had been reduced from 134 to 74 by the end of 1905, chiefly as a result of Liberal by-election victories. At the dissolution there were 310 Conservatives, 62 Unionists, 214 Liberals and 'Lib.-Labs.', 4 L.R.C. Members, and 82 Nationalists.

The Election of 1906 brought a startling change. The Conservative total shrank to 130, and the Liberal Unionist total to 28. Instead of a Tory majority of 74 over the Opposition parties, there were 429 Liberal and Labour M.P.s, giving a Liberal *plus* Labour majority of 271, not counting the Irish, or of 354, including 83 Irish Nationalist Members.

Of the 429, the Labour Representation Committee, now feeling entitled to call itself the 'Labour Party', accounted for 30, and the 'Lib.-Labs.' numbered about 24. There were thus 375 Liberals, apart from 'Lib.-Labs.', out of a total of 670 M.P.s. The Liberals had a clear majority over all other parties, even in the unlikely event of a solid hostile vote of Conservatives, Unionists, Nationalists, Labour, and the 'Lib.-Labs.'

This resounding victory had been won primarily on the issue of Free Trade, which had been raised to a position of paramount influence by Joseph Chamberlain's tariff campaign of the three preceding years. But many secondary issues had played an important part—not least the Labour demand for a

reversal of the Taff Vale decision. The Irish, as usual, had voted on the Home Rule issue ; and the electoral situation in Ireland showed practically no change. In Great Britain, on the other hand, votes were cast mainly for and against Free Trade and, in the industrial areas, for or against Free Trade and the restoration of Trade Union rights. The Labour M.P.s came to the House pledged to support the Liberals in maintaining Free Trade and establishing Home Rule in Ireland ; and the great majority of the Liberals came pledged to support a Bill which would make it impossible for Trade Union funds to be attacked as they had been in the Taff Vale case.

Of the 30 successful Labour Party candidates, including one miner who joined the Party after election, only five were elected in three-cornered contests. Twenty-four had only Conservative or Unionist opponents, and one, Keir Hardie, only two Liberals against him in the double Merthyr constituency. As against this, out of 26 unsuccessful Labour Party candidates, 18 had to fight both Liberals and Tories, and only seven were beaten in straight fights against Conservatives or Unionists, the remaining contest being that of Pete Curran at Jarrow, against a Liberal only. In addition to the L.R.C.'s nominees, there were 13 candidates put forward either by the Social Democratic Federation or under other Socialist auspices. These all had to face three-cornered fights ; and they were all beaten.

It is thus plain that the Labour successes of 1906 were won, despite the Labour Party's repudiation of ' Lib.-Lab.'ism, by an alliance between Liberal and Labour voters. The Liberal Party, determined above all else to win a victory for Free Trade against the Protectionists, was prepared to support, for a limited number of seats in the industrial centres, Labour candidates who were sound on the fiscal question. It was also ready to promise action on the Taff Vale issue, in return for the support of Labour voters in other constituencies and in order to keep out the Tories in areas where Liberal and Labour candidates would have been in danger of cutting each other's throats. Such bargains were naturally easiest to make in the double constituencies, in which one Liberal and

one Labour man could be run in partnership. Nine of the new Labour Members were elected by constituencies of this type, in open or virtual partnership with Liberals. They included Ramsay MacDonald, who became Broadhurst's colleague at Leicester, Philip Snowden at Blackburn, and G. H. Roberts at Norwich.

There was, however, nothing in the nature of a general Liberal-Labour pact. There were, in fact, astonishing differences in different parts of the country. In Lancashire and Cheshire, out of 16 Labour Party candidates, 15 had straight fights against Tories, and 13 of these 15 were elected, whereas the four Socialist candidates were all defeated in three-cornered fights. In Yorkshire, on the other hand, five out of eight L.R.C. candidates had both Liberals and Tories against them, as had all three independent Socialist candidates. The result was that in Yorkshire Labour won only three seats, one in the double constituency of Halifax, where only one Liberal stood, one in Leeds, in a straight fight with a Tory, and one in West Bradford, where F. W. Jowett won against both the older parties the seat which he had lost by only 41 votes in a straight fight with a Tory in 1900. On the North-East Coast, the L.R.C. fought seven seats, and won four—three against Tories only and one in a three-cornered contest. The three defeats were in one three-cornered fight, one in which only a Tory was put up against the Labour man, and one in which Labour and Liberal were opposed. Elsewhere in England and Wales there were only scattered Labour candidates. Greater London brought three victories out of five contests—three of them three-cornered, and two against Tories only. Labour won the latter two, and one of the others. In the whole of the rest of England there were but eight Labour candidates, of whom four were successful, all without Liberal opponents. Of the defeated, two had three-cornered fights, and the other two only Conservative or Unionist opposition. The solitary independent Socialist in London and the four in the rest of the country had all to meet both Conservative and Liberal opponents. In all Wales there were but two Labour candidates, Keir Hardie at Merthyr and James Winstone, of the South Wales Miners, at Monmouth, where he was beaten

in a three-cornered contest. One seat was also fought in Belfast, against a Tory only, but without success.

There remains Scotland, where the L.R.C. had only four candidates in the field, but was working in loose association with the separate Scottish Workers' Representation Committee, mainly supported by the Scottish Miners' Federation. The S.W.R.C. put up five candidates, all miners, and all for mining seats. In addition the Social Democratic Federation fought one seat. Every one of these ten candidates had to fight a three-cornered contest. There was not a single case of Liberal-Labour alliance throughout Scotland, even in a double constituency. Alexander Wilkie, who won a seat at Dundee, had two Liberal as well as two Tory opponents. The only other Labour success in Scotland was that of G. N. Barnes, who won the Blackfriars division of Glasgow against a Tory and a Liberal.

Thus 13 out of the Labour Party's seats were won in Lancashire and Cheshire, in every case as the result of an alliance of Labour and Liberal voters. In no other area was there anything like the same tendency for the two parties to work together, and nowhere else were anything like the same successes secured. This was doubtless due in the main to the great strength of Free Trade opinion in Lancashire. The threat to Free Trade made the Lancashire Liberals willing to go much further than Liberals in other parts of the country towards meeting the Labour claims ; and the Labour candidates were as fully pledged as the Liberals to resist the Protectionist attack. In Scotland, on the other hand, traditional Liberalism was much more bitterly hostile to a Labour movement which was, in general, much further to the left than the textile workers and skilled engineers who dominated Trade Unionism in Lancashire ; and in Yorkshire there was much less fervent devotion to Free Trade to serve as a force driving Liberals and Labour men into a single camp. Moreover, Yorkshire was much weaker than Lancashire as a Trade Union area, and Labour politics were much more in the hands of Socialists than of Trade Union leaders. Outside these areas contests were too few for generalizations to be usefully made ; but it may be observed that to some extent

the 'Lib.-Labs.' tended to be strong in areas where the Labour Party was weak, and vice versa. Thus, whereas Lancashire and Cheshire returned only two 'Lib.-Labs.' and 13 Labour M.P.s, the Midlands returned eight 'Lib.-Labs.' and only two Labour men. Scotland, however, did not elect a single 'Lib.-Lab.' Scottish Liberalism would have no truck with Labour, even of the old-fashioned 'Lib.-Lab.' brand.

In returning to the House of Commons 24 strong, as compared with the eight of 1900, the 'Lib.-Labs.', as well as the L.R.C., had cause to be pleased with the election results. Of these 24, no less than 13 were miners; and these formed in effect a separate parliamentary group, acting as the representatives of the Miners' Federation and maintained by its national parliamentary fund. Only this section of the 'Lib.-Labs.' had any real cohesion: the remaining dozen, even where they had been, or remained, Trade Union leaders, had very little organic connection with the Trade Union movement. John Burns, who became President of the Local Government Board in the Liberal Cabinet, was by this time absorbed entirely in official Liberalism, as Henry Broadhurst had been a long time before him. W. R. Cremer had dropped right out of the Trade Union movement some time before. Richard Bell, of the Railway Servants, Havelock Wilson, of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union, and John Ward, of the Navvies' Union, retained their Trade Union connections; and W. C. Steadman, of the Barge Builders, held the important position of Secretary to the Trades Union Congress from 1905 to his death in 1911. But only to a very limited extent did these Liberal-Labour M.P.s act together, and an attempt in 1907 by the Liberal Party machine to form a Liberal Trade Unionist group under its aegis met with no success. Steadman, in particular, usually acted with the Labour Party; and on the Taff Vale issue, and indeed on most Labour questions in a narrow sense, most of the Trade Union 'Lib.-Labs.' could be relied on to co-operate with the Labour Members. This applies particularly to the miners, whose organizations were by no means solid in refusing to throw in their lot with the Labour Party. The Scottish Miners, as

we have seen, ran their own candidates under a Scottish Workers' Representation Committee formed with the co-operation of the Scottish Trades Union Congress on much the same independent lines as the L.R.C. In addition, the Lancashire and Cheshire Miners' Federation actually joined the L.R.C.; and two of its leaders, Thomas Glover and Stephen Walsh, were among the Members elected to Parliament under L.R.C. auspices. These Members provided a link with the Members returned under the auspices of the Miners' Federation; and it was only the hostility of the older 'Lib.-Lab.' leaders that prevented the Miners' Federation from joining the Labour Party as a body until three years after the election of 1906.

As we have seen, the S.D.F. failed to secure the return of even one of its candidates, and the Socialists who stood under independent local auspices did no better. At Burnley, H. M. Hyndman was beaten by the old 'Lib.-Lab.', Fred Maddison, running third to the Tory as well. S. G. Hobson was badly beaten at Rochdale, and George Lansbury by Havelock Wilson at Middlesbrough. Indeed, most of the Socialist candidates were left at the bottom of the poll, as were all those of the Scottish Workers' Representation Committee, and most of the L.R.C. nominees who had to face three-cornered fights. But only in a very few cases did the Labour candidate fail to muster at least a respectable vote. In all, the L.R.C. polled 331,280 votes, the S.W.R.C. 14,878, and the S.D.F. and the Socialist independents 24,473. The 'Lib.-Labs.', including the miners, accounted for about another 100,000—this out of a total vote of rather less than six millions.

The election in general was fought, as we have seen, mainly on the Free Trade issue, with Irish Home Rule as the second plank in the Liberal platform, and the Labour demand for a new Trade Union Bill prominent in the industrial areas. The advocates of Woman Suffrage, among whom Mrs. Pankhurst had already launched her militant Women's Social and Political Union in 1903, endeavoured to make the suffrage question a test issue for candidates, and secured numerous pledges of Liberal as well as Labour support. But the suffrage, as well as the important questions of appeasement in South Africa

and the settlement of the Chinese labour problem, were side issues in comparison with the tariff controversy and the struggle over Home Rule.

It is interesting to see on what basis the Labour candidates made their appeal to the electors. The L.R.C., the I.L.P., the S.D.F., and the Miners' Federation all issued their own election manifestos ; and the Trades Union Congress Parliamentary Committee also put forward a list of test questions to be addressed to candidates. In addition, a large number of women's organizations, including the principal women's Trade Unions, published a manifesto calling for Votes for Women, and this was endorsed by the I.L.P., but not by the L.R.C., which made no reference in its manifesto to questions of electoral reform.

The L.R.C.'s manifesto, indeed, was in the main an appeal to Trade Unionists " to forget all the political differences which have kept you apart in the past, and vote for " the Labour candidates. It declared against Protection and condemned Chinese labour. It dismissed as useless the Tory Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, and demanded for the Trade Unions, without being specific, " the same liberty as capital enjoys ". It pressed for slum clearance, taxation of land values, and provision for the aged poor. But beyond these it made no particular demands ; and it contained no reference, even of the most indirect kind, to Socialism, or to any change in the basis of the social order. Clearly, its purpose was to mobilize the Trade Union vote, and to raise as few issues as possible of a sort likely to divide the Trade Unionists.

The Independent Labour Party naturally struck a more challenging note, attacking Liberals and Conservatives alike as existing to " protect the interests of the rich ", and to keep the workers divided. It declared itself a Socialist party, and put forward a programme of immediate demands substantially ahead of those formulated by the L.R.C. These demands included Votes for Women. But the I.L.P. was content to put the main stress, not on Socialism, but on the need for working-class solidarity and independent working-class representation.

The Trades Union Congress, in its manifesto, naturally gave first place to the proposed Trade Disputes Bill which had been drawn up on its behalf to undo the effects of the Taff Vale Judgment. It proceeded to outline a programme of industrial and social legislation, including the eight hours day, a new workmen's compensation law, amendment of the Truck Acts, old-age pensions at sixty, and new housing legislation ; and it also called for the abolition of Chinese labour in South Africa and for adult suffrage and public payment of election expenses. It made no specific reference to Labour Party candidates, but called upon Trade Unionists to cast their votes only for those who showed themselves sympathetic to working-class claims. The Miners' Federation, in its manifesto, confined itself to appealing for its own candidates on the basis of a programme of industrial reforms, and to stating that " whilst the candidates will run under the auspices of the Miners' Federation, they will be found to be in full accord with the aspirations and needs of the labouring classes generally, and will co-operate heartily with the other Labour representatives ".

Even the Social Democratic Federation, though it declared that " no thorough improvement could be brought about until the people owned the means of making and distributing all useful and beautiful things ", concentrated in its election manifesto chiefly on ' palliatives ', among which it put forward three as of special and immediate importance. These were Free Education, State Organization of the Unemployed, and Pensions for the Aged and the Incapacitated.

Thus, the Labour bodies, even including the S.D.F., were content to fight the General Election of 1906 on an essentially moderate and reformist programme. They knew well enough that the electors, even if they were tired of the Conservatives, were in no mood to respond to revolutionary appeals, or seriously to regard Socialism as an election issue. Moreover, the Socialists inside the Labour Representation Committee were facing the first real electoral test of the Socialist alliance with the Trade Unions, and were determined to do nothing that might break the solidity of the Trade Union front. The Trade Unionists wanted the effects of the Taff Vale Judgment

removed : it was well worth the while of the I.L.P. to conciliate them, and at the same time to secure Liberal support for a number of their candidates, by a show of moderation in curious contrast with the denunciations of capitalism which had been uttered by the I.L.P. pioneers of the 'nineties.

Socialists and Trade Unionists alike had their reward. The new Parliamentary Labour Party of 1906 included, besides Keir Hardie, such I.L.P. leaders as MacDonald, Snowden, Jowett, Clynes, G. H. Roberts, and Parker, and was, indeed, predominantly Socialist in its composition. The Trade Unionists, for their part, had exacted from most of the Liberals pledges to support their Trade Disputes Bill, and were well placed, with the aid of the Labour Party, for pressing it upon the Liberal Government. No one had yet had time to measure the real strength of the new force that was making its first bid for parliamentary power. The success of the Labour candidates had surprised everyone : how they would acquit themselves in the House of Commons was still to be seen.

CHAPTER XV

VICTORY—THE CHALLENGE RENEWED

Labour and Liberalism, 1906–09—The Trade Disputes Act—The Osborne Judgment

In the new Parliament of 1906, the Labour Members had one perfectly clear mandate from the voters who had sent them to the House of Commons. In many respects the policy of the Labour Party was still undefined, and it was difficult to distinguish between Liberal and Labour professions. But on the issues raised by the Taff Vale Judgment the Labour M.P.s were in no doubt concerning the wishes of those whom they represented. The Trade Union movement was crying out with one voice for the complete reversal of the decisions of the law courts, for the full security of Trade Union funds against actions of the Taff Vale type, and for better legal safeguards of the rights of peaceful picketing and of the conditions necessary for the effective conduct of trade disputes.

Upon these matters there could be no question of compromise; for compromise would have ruined the prospects of the new party by discrediting it in the eyes of the Trade Unions. The Liberal Government, however, was very reluctant to give the Trade Unions what they demanded. It was ready to go some way—to amend the law relating to peaceful picketing, and to agree that no act done in connection with a trade dispute should be actionable merely because it was done in combination, that is, if a similar act done by a single person would have been untainted with legal wrong. But it was not prepared to say that on no account should Trade Union funds be made liable for wrongful acts, at any rate if they were done by the authority or with the consent of a Trade Union Executive or responsible governing body. It tried, instead, to draw a distinction between acts done with and without this

authority or consent, and to make the Union funds liable when the governing body authorized or failed to repudiate a wrongful act done by members of the Union. This proposal involved very difficult questions of 'agency'. It would have left the courts to settle not only what acts were wrongful in the eyes of the law, but also under what circumstances such acts should be regarded as having been done by or with the authority of the Union.

The Trade Union leaders saw very clearly that the Bill introduced by the Government, embodying this specious proposal, would in practice leave the Union funds still at the mercy of the courts of law. The Labour Party, acting on the instructions of a special conference representing the entire Trade Union movement, promptly introduced a rival Bill of its own, proposing complete immunity for Trade Union funds from all civil actions arising out of trade disputes. The Government soon discovered that many of its own supporters had given in the course of the General Election unequivocal pledges to support the complete reversal of the Taff Vale Judgment. The Government was compelled to withdraw its own Bill, and to bring in a new one which in effect conceded the whole of the Trade Union demands. This revised Bill speedily became law; for the House of Lords, though intensely critical of its provisions, was not prepared to force the issue by rejecting or amending it, in face of the overwhelming victory so recently won at the polls by the combined Liberal and Labour forces.

The Trade Disputes Act of 1906 gave the Trade Unions all they had asked for. It laid down in its first section that 'an act done in pursuance of an agreement or combination by two or more persons shall, if done in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute, not be actionable unless the act, if done without any such agreement or combination, would be actionable'. This was a notable addition to the victory won in 1875, when it had been laid down in the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act that the mere fact of combination should not render criminal under the law of conspiracy any act which would not have been criminal if it had been done by a single individual. The Act of 1875 had prevented combina-

tions from being treated by the courts as criminal conspiracies; the new Act prevented the courts from regarding them as 'civil conspiracies', punishable by assessment in damages though not by penalties under the criminal law.

The second section of the Act of 1906 dealt with peaceful picketing. Away back in 1858 it had been made lawful for pickets 'peacefully to persuade' workers to abstain from working when a trade dispute was in progress. The right of picketing had been, in effect, entirely abrogated by the reactionary Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1871; and, when it was restored by the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act of 1875, the only right given was that of picketing for the purpose of 'obtaining or communicating information', the right of 'peaceful persuasion' being withheld. This latter right, essential to the effective legalization of picketing, was now at length fully regained.

The third section of the Trade Disputes Act embodied a further important concession. It made 'restraint of trade' and incitement to breach of contract lawful where they arose out of actions done in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute. Thus, if, in the course of a dispute, an employer brought in blacklegs under contract to replace the strikers, it became lawful for the strikers, or for the Union, to endeavour to persuade the blacklegs not to remain at work; and the new Act also barred actions against Trade Union leaders on the ground that their calls for strike action amounted to a restraint of trade, or to an interference 'with the right of some other person to dispose of his capital or labour as he wills'.

Finally, the fourth section laid down unequivocally that 'an action against a Trade Union . . . in respect of any tortious act (i.e. any civil wrong giving rise to a claim for damages) alleged to have been committed by or on behalf of the Trade Union, shall not be entertained by any court'. The effect of this was to give complete protection to Trade Union funds against such actions as that brought by the Taff Vale Railway Company, and indeed against any actions brought against the Trade Union in respect of its activities as a bargaining or negotiating body using the weapon of the strike.

Thus, the Trade Disputes Act constituted a complete victory for the Trade Unions and a signal triumph for the Labour Party, which had successfully upheld the full Trade Union claim against the Liberal Government's attempts to find a middle way. The Trade Unions were too well aware of the use which the law courts were likely to make of any compromise solution for their leaders to be put off with less than a complete acceptance of their claims ; and, while the Government's surrender was mainly due to its sense of the strength of feeling in the country and to its knowledge of the pledges given by many Liberals during the election, the new Labour Party got the credit of having successfully forced the Government's hand. It did, indeed, deserve the credit for its firm refusal to compromise—a refusal amply explained by its consciousness that its future standing with the Trade Unions would be mainly determined by its handling of the Taff Vale problem.

This was an auspicious start for the new party ; and it was able, during the opening session of Parliament, to score another important success, by getting its own Education (Provision of Meals) Act passed into law with Government support. This success was, however, marred by the exclusion of Scotland, which was struck out by the House of Lords. The Labour Party had then to choose between accepting the truncated Bill and losing it altogether. The course chosen was acceptance ; for without the Liberals the party was not in a position to embark on a struggle with the Second Chamber. The Bill was, in any case, only permissive, and it was left to each local authority to make use of it or not, as it pleased. The more progressive authorities did make use of it in the years of trade depression, 1908 and 1909 ; but there were many industrial areas in which it was not applied at all.

In 1906 trade was relatively good ; and Keir Hardie's efforts to secure better treatment for the unemployed met with little success. All that could be got from the Government was a grant of £200,000 to the local relief committees set up under the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905. Nor was Hardie more successful with his Bill designed to secure improved treatment of aliens, or with his Women's Suffrage Bill. The first of these was rejected by the House of Lords, and the

second made no progress in the Commons, in face of the Government's refusal of facilities.

The Government itself did not fare altogether happily with its own measures. Its Education Bill, based on an unsatisfactory compromise over the question of the non-provided schools, was torn in pieces in the House of Lords, and a number of other measures were badly held up. From the Labour standpoint the chief gains of the session, in additon to the Trade Disputes Act and the Provision of Meals Act, were the new Workmen's Compensation Act, which extended protection to about six million workers previously unprotected, the recognition of Trade Unionism in Government factories, and the removal of the property qualification for county Justices of the Peace. As against this, the Budget introduced no change of substance, and nothing was done to implement the promise that old age pensions would be granted. The Government, in effect, was still settling down, taking the measure of the new Parliament and of the hostile House of Lords, and facing divided counsels in its own ranks between Whigs and Liberal Imperialists and more advanced Radicals.

In this year, 1906, Labour activity in by-elections was very small. When Henry Broadhurst died early in the year, a Liberal was elected to succeed him at Leicester without Labour opposition—presumably because in this double constituency the party was afraid of jeopardizing the seat held by Ramsay MacDonald if it attempted to run a second candidate. The only two Labour contests of the year were at Cockermouth and Huddersfield. At the former, which had not been fought at the General Election, Robert Smillie, the Scottish Miners' leader, was heavily defeated in August in a three-cornered contest, in which the Conservative won the seat, probably thanks to his intervention. At Huddersfield, in November, T. Russell Williams, who had come within 500 of winning the seat at the General Election, came even nearer, losing to the Liberal by only 340, with the Conservative another 600 behind.

1907 was, from the standpoint of the Liberal Government, a much more fruitful legislative year. The Budget increased death duties on large estates and introduced a graduated

income tax. The Territorial Army was established, the Deceased Wife's Sister Act passed, and an important legal reform made in the Criminal Appeal Act. Social legislation included the establishment of School Medical Inspection, the passing of the Small Holdings Act, and an Act bringing laundries within the scope of factory legislation. The Labour Party was less successful. Its Unemployed Workmen Bill, introduced with the support of the 'Lib.-Lab.' Trade Unionists, made no progress ; and when the Government brought in a resolution proposing a limitation on the powers of the House of Lords, the Labour amendment in favour of abolishing the Second Chamber was defeated by 317 votes to 102. In this year the Miners' Federation, with the backing of the Labour Party, brought forward its Eight Hours Bill, which was countered by the Government with a promise of a Bill of its own in the following year.

In 1907 there was much more activity in by-elections, involving both official and unofficial Labour and Socialist candidates. In January W. E. Harvey won North-East Derbyshire for the Miners' Federation, against a Conservative, but with Liberal support. In February Fred Bramley, fighting as a Socialist, came in bottom in a three-cornered contest in South Aberdeen, which had not been fought since Champion's contest of 1892. In April William Walker, repeating his General Election experience, was beaten by a Conservative in North Belfast. In May Ben Cooper, of the Cigar Makers' Union, fought Stepney as a 'Lib.-Lab.', and was beaten by a Conservative in a straight fight. In this month also Bertrand Russell, standing as a Suffragist, was heavily defeated at Wimbledon by a Tory. In July Albert Stanley won another seat for the Miners in North-West Staffordshire, in a straight fight with a Conservative ; and in the same month the Labour Party scored its one official victory, when Pete Curran, of the Gasworkers and the I.L.P., won Jarrow by a good majority in a four-cornered fight against Conservative, Liberal, and Irish Nationalist candidates. In September John Hill, of the Boilermakers, repeated the experience of the General Election by losing the Kirkdale division of Liverpool in a straight fight with a Conservative, and in November James

Holmes came in third in the Liberal stronghold of West Hull, which had been last fought by the I.L.P. in 1895.

But much the most important of the year's contests was the Colne Valley by-election of July, in which Victor Grayson, standing as a Socialist without official Labour support, won by a small majority in a three-cornered struggle. The significance of the Colne Valley election lies in the fact that it was the opening round in the battle, which was to become increasingly acrimonious during the next few years, between the official Labour movement and its left-wing critics. Colne Valley had been an early stronghold of the I.L.P., and Tom Mann had fought the seat in 1895, without shaking the security of the sitting Liberal, Sir J. Kitson, who held the seat continuously up to 1907.

Grayson, who was only twenty-five, was adopted at Colne Valley without the national endorsement of the I.L.P., of which he was a member. The I.L.P. leaders wished to put forward one of the older men who were on the Labour Party's list of approved candidates ; but the local stalwarts insisted on having the man of their choice, and Grayson's name was not submitted to the Labour Party for endorsement. He ran as a ' Labour and Socialist ' candidate, and of the national leaders of the Labour Party and the I.L.P. only Philip Snowden went into the constituency to support him. On his election, the question arose of his relationship to the Labour Party and to the I.L.P. The latter body agreed to treat him as one of its members in respect of allowances ; but trouble arose over his position in the House, as he refused to sign the Labour Party constitution, and the party would not recognize him unless he would submit to its rules. Grayson therefore sat as an independent Socialist, but remained inside the I.L.P. in a state of continual feud with Ramsay MacDonald and the official leadership.

The following year, 1908, was one of advancing trade depression, which gave increased urgency to the demands of the unemployed. The Labour Party introduced the Right to Work Bill without success ; but Grayson accused it of lukewarmness in pressing the claims of the workless, and after several scenes in the House, in which the majority of the

Labour Party did not support him, he was suspended for the remainder of the session, and thus set free to tour the country, endeavouring to mobilize the forces of discontent against the official leaders.

Meanwhile, in Parliament, the Liberals redeemed their most important election promise by passing the Old Age Pensions Act ; and they also placed on the statute book the Coal Mines Eight Hours Act, which, though it fell short of the miners' demands, did represent a substantial gain. The other important Government Bills of the session were a Licensing Bill for public houses and a new Education Bill ; but both of these came to shipwreck upon powerful opposition both in and outside Parliament. The Labour Party during the year held special conferences on unemployment and old-age pensions, and in addition to its action on behalf of the unemployed, tried to make the provision of school meals compulsory and to improve the provision for medical inspection of school children.

Meanwhile, the party fought a number of by-elections, all without success. In February, at South Leeds, Albert Fox came in a bad third, whereas in 1906 he had been second, a long way ahead of the Tory. In April, at Dewsbury, Ben Turner was again at the bottom of the poll in a three-cornered contest, as he had been at the General Election. In May there were two contests in Scotland. At Dundee, where Labour already held one of the two seats, G. H. Stuart was beaten by Winston Churchill and also, rather narrowly, by the Tory, in a four-cornered fight in which E. Scrymgeour, the Prohibitionist, also polled a few hundred votes. At Montrose Burghs, which had not been fought in 1906, Joseph Burgess was second, a long way behind the Liberal, but ahead of the Tory.

In addition to these official Labour contests there were a number in which Socialist candidates took the field. In April, at North-West Manchester, Dan Irving of the S.D.F. stood in an exciting election against Joynson Hicks and Churchill. Joynson Hicks won in a close fight, but Irving polled only 276 votes. Undeterred by this example, J. W. Benson fought Pudsey in June, polling 1,291 and causing the narrow defeat

of the Liberal. In August Herbert Burrows of the S.D.F. fought Cremer's old seat at Haggerston, but was bottom in a three-cornered fight, which the Conservative won. Finally in September E. R. Hartley flouted the Labour leadership by going to the poll at Newcastle-on-Tyne, where the Labour Party already held one of the two seats. His intervention probably led to the defeat of the Liberal.

These Socialist candidatures were in part an attempt by the Social Democratic Federation to reassert itself, and in part a result of the developing criticism of the Labour Party's dependence on the Liberals—a criticism which grew more widespread as industry became more severely depressed.

In the following year, 1909, trade was still bad, and discontent increased. The Government, in addition to passing the Government of South Africa Act into law, carried through several important social measures. The Fair Wages Clause was substantially improved, the Trade Boards Act instituted a legal minimum wage in a few notoriously sweated trades, and Labour Exchanges were set up on a national scale. But in the public mind these reforms were overshadowed by the famous Lloyd George Budget, which introduced the taxation of land values and led to the constitutional struggle with the House of Lords which was to occupy the next two years. For the Labour Party, the other critical event of the year was the Osborne Judgment, by which the House of Lords decided that all political action by registered Trade Unions was unlawful, and thus struck at the very root of the party's existence. The Labour Party succeeded in the House of Commons in carrying by 242 votes to 92 a resolution in favour of Payment of Members. But no action was taken upon this until two years later, and in the meantime the party had to face the constitutional crisis with no assured funds at its back.

In the by-elections of 1909, the Labour Party scored a single success, when Joseph Pointer of the I.L.P. won the Attercliffe division of Sheffield, thanks to a four-cornered contest in which the Conservative vote was split. Frank Smith fought by-elections at Taunton in February (against a Tory only) and at Croydon in March (three-cornered); and in October Dr. Alfred Salter came in bottom in a three-cornered

contest at Bermondsey. In July J. G. Hancock, a ‘ Lib.-Lab.’ miner, was returned for Mid-Derbyshire, in a contest which was complicated by the recent decision of the Miners’ Federation to join the Labour Party. Hancock was willing enough to receive Labour support, but not to sever his old connections with the Liberals, and there was much confusion over his status, and much criticism of the Labour leaders for such support as they gave him during the contest.

There was even stronger criticism of the Labour Party’s failure to put candidates in the field at a number of other by-elections. In England, Herbert Samuel was allowed to be elected for Cleveland without Labour opposition ; and in Scotland no less than six seats were allowed to go by default. This was partly because the Labour Party had at this time no real organization of its own in Scotland. As we have seen, a number of the Scottish contests in 1906 had been conducted by a separate body—the Scottish Workers’ Representation Committee. Between this body and the Labour Party there had been continual negotiations and bickerings ; and in 1908 the Labour Party asserted, and began to act upon, its right to accept the affiliation of Scottish Trade Unions and other organizations irrespective of the Scottish Labour Party, as the S.W.R.C. had come to be called. This led to the disbandment of the Scottish Labour Party in 1909 ; and for a time there was little effective organization for running candidates north of the border. It took time to develop new arrangements ; and the Labour Party remained weak in Scotland right up to 1914, despite the strength of Socialist opinion on the Clyde. Only in 1913 was a separate Scottish Advisory Council of the Labour Party established with a constitution and powers of its own.

The party was indeed by 1909 struggling with serious difficulties on all hands. The Osborne Judgment was only one of its troubles ; but it was the most serious, in that it threatened the party’s very continuance on the basis of Trade Union financial support. It is no longer very profitable to argue whether the judges in the various courts before which the case was heard were right in deciding that Trade Unions had no power to spend any part of their funds on political

objects ; for when the House of Lords has decided on a particular case what the law is, that is the law until Parliament alters it by statute. But it is pertinent to note that the various judges gave widely different reasons for their decision, and that clearly the defining clause of the Trade Union Act of 1876 had never been intended to bear the meaning now placed upon it, as an exhaustive list of the activities proper to Trade Unions. Otherwise, it would certainly have included some reference to the payment of benefits to members, which is nearly universal in Trade Union practice.

It will be most convenient to deal later with the issues raised by the Osborne Judgment, when we come to consider the Trade Union Act of 1913. Here it is enough to point out that for the four years between 1909 and 1913 the Labour Party had to struggle on under very difficult conditions, facing two General Elections in a single year with no assured financial resources, and forced to work for the reversal of the judgment during a period when other issues necessarily took pride of place. In the contest with the House of Lords which followed the Lloyd George Budget of 1909, the Labour Party had, of course, to range itself on the side of the Liberal Government ; and this made it difficult for the party to bring effective pressure to bear for the redress of its own grievances until the major political crisis was at an end. Nor was this the only difficulty ; for the growth of militant suffragism, in face of the Liberals' failure to enfranchise women, divided the Labour movement deeply, and soon the crisis over Irish Home Rule supervened upon the constitutional crisis and again compelled the party to line up behind the Government. At the same time, economic recovery from the depression of 1908–09 led to new movements of industrial unrest—the more so because wages failed to keep pace with the rising cost of living. The left-wing movements which had championed the cause of the unemployed during the depression took a new turn, and developed into movements demanding a more aggressive policy of both political and industrial action. These forces were to reach their highest point during the years immediately before the Great War of 1914 ; but it is important to understand that their seeds were sown, and the movements themselves for

the most part set on foot, during the years which followed directly upon the Liberal election victory of 1906. The alleged subservience of the Labour Party to the Liberal Government was not purely an outcome of the peculiar conditions which developed after the Budget of 1909. It existed before that, as a consequence of the very constitution of the Labour Party as an alliance of Socialists and Trade Unionists, having as its immediate aim to wean the Trade Unions from their historic association with the Liberal Party. Moreover, from 1906 onwards, the great majority of the Labour Members of Parliament held their seats only because they were supported by Liberal as well as Labour votes. The party was very conscious of this, and shaped its electoral policy so as to minimize conflict with the Liberals, especially in the two-member constituencies in which it could hope to share the representation. These tactics were odious to the Social Democratic Federation and also to the left wing inside the Independent Labour Party. But it is clear that without them the Labour Party could neither have become a political force in 1906, nor have held its position in the difficult elections of 1910. It can be argued that a very small party following an aggressive Socialist policy would have been preferable to the Labour Party as it actually was ; but it cannot be argued that, either in 1906 or subsequently, the Trade Unions could have been induced to support such a party, or the electors to return more than a handful of M.P.s on a purely Socialist ticket.

CHAPTER XVI

LABOUR AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS

The Budget of 1909—The Struggle with the Lords—The Two Elections of 1910—Labour's Leaders

Thirty years afterwards, the crisis which developed out of the Lloyd George Budget of 1909 seems absurdly disproportionate to its immediate cause. The tax proposals embodied in the Budget were modest in the extreme by present-day standards; even the much-abused provisions for the taxation of land values now seem very small beer. The introduction of the supertax was indeed the thin end of a wedge which was to be forced in much further within a few years; but the scale proposed was tiny. The trouble over the Budget was due not to the amount of money it was designed to levy upon the rich, but to the feeling that it was the first instalment of a Radical attack upon the sacred rights of property.

Moreover, behind the struggle over the Budget there were other issues—notably the violent dislike of Irish Home Rule among both Tory landlords and Chamberlainite imperialists. There was the hatred of the brewers, not only for the proposed new liquor duties, but also for the Liberal licensing policy, which the Lords had defeated by throwing out the Government's Licensing Bill. And, on the Liberal side, there was the feeling that the time had at last come to settle accounts with a Second Chamber which had killed or maimed one after another of Liberalism's cherished measures.

The Conservatives, for their part, rallied behind the House of Lords as the constitutional bulwark of privilege and of the existing social order. They were of opinion, at the time when the Lords threw out the Budget, that Liberal popularity in the country had so waned as to give them the prospect of a comfortable majority in a General Election, and they under-

estimated both the possibilities of Lloyd George's Limehouse oratory and the dangers of appealing to the electors as the defenders of hereditary privilege. Their tactics enabled Lloyd George, as the effective leader of the Liberals, to take them at a disadvantage. But, even so, the Tories won a good many seats, and the great Liberal majority melted away in the General Election of January, 1910. In 1906 the Liberals had returned 399 members : in January, 1910, they returned only 275, whereas the Tory strength had risen from 158 to 273. For the future, any Liberal Government would have to depend for its majority on Labour and Irish Nationalist votes.

The Labour Party came back in January, 1910, stronger than it had been in 1906—with 40 Members as against 30. But this apparent gain was entirely due to the transfer of the Miners' Federation M.P.s from the Liberal to the Labour ranks. The 'Lib.-Lab.' group was reduced, partly by this change and partly by defeats at the polls, from the 24 of 1906 to a handful of seven at the most, including certain miners who refused to change their party allegiance. In effect, the 'Lib.-Lab.' group ceased to exist. John Burns was a Liberal Cabinet Minister, the four miners—Burt, Fenwick, John Wilson, and Hancock—no longer counted for anything when the Miners' Federation had joined the Labour Party ; and this left only John Ward, the Navvies' leader, and Henry Vivian, the advocate of Co-partnership.

In 1906 the Labour Party had put up in all 56 candidates, and there had been 13 other Socialist and Labour men in the field. In January, 1910, the party, reinforced by the Miners' candidates, fought 85 seats, despite the unfavourable financial position created by the Osborne Judgment. On the other hand, Socialists and Labour independents numbered only 10, who were all defeated, as in 1906. As before, the Labour Party's biggest contingent came from Lancashire and Cheshire, with 13 Members—the same as in 1906. The rest were widely scattered—eight from the Midlands, six from Yorkshire, five from South Wales, three from the North-East, two each from London and Scotland, and one from the Eastern Counties. The chief apparent gains were in the Midlands, Yorkshire, and South Wales ; but these were mainly due to the accession of

the Miners. Excluding these gains, the Labour Party gained three seats in the Midlands and one in Yorkshire, as against two losses in the North-East, and one each in London and the South-East. The position of political Labour in Scotland still remained very weak.

The party, as it emerged from the election, included no less than 17 miners—nearly half the total. Of the remainder, all but six were Trade Union leaders, drawn from a wide range of trades. The six were the contribution of the middle-class elements in the I.L.P.

All things considered, the result of the elections was not unsatisfactory, as far as numbers were concerned ; for the party was handicapped not only by the Osborne Judgment, but also by a situation in which it had of necessity to play second fiddle to the Liberals over the constitutional issues. Again it owed its seats almost everywhere to a combination of Labour and Liberal voters. Of the 40 seats won, 39 were won without Liberal opposition, and in the fortieth case the Liberal candidate was without official backing. The 34 Labour candidates who had both Liberal and Conservative opponents were all beaten, whereas there were only 11 defeats where no Liberal was in the field. The 10 defeated Socialist candidates outside the party had all to face both Tory and Liberal opponents.

Thus, the Labour Party came back to the Parliament of 1910 with its real strength unaltered ; but with a new problem to face. It could no longer vote against the Government without risking its defeat, and therewith the triumph of the House of Lords, and the defeat of the Budget and of Irish Home Rule. It can be argued, as against this, that Labour votes now mattered much more to the Liberals, and that accordingly the party's bargaining position was improved. But in fact the Liberals were well aware that the Labour Party would not venture to turn the Government out, and were in a position to argue against Labour demands that all other controversial issues must be postponed until the constitutional crisis had been settled. Moreover, the ranks of the Labour Party now included a considerable number of men who were really Liberals, and had changed their party allegiance at the behest

of the Miners' Federation without therewith altering their political attitude.

The session of 1910 was necessarily barren of important social achievements. The Labour Party introduced a Bill designed to undo the effects of the Osborne Judgment, but could make no progress with it. A series of mining disasters had forced to the front the issue of safety in the coal mines; and the Labour Party after strong pressure succeeded in getting an increase in the number of mining inspectors. On the accession of George V, it tried in vain to secure a revision of the Civil List, and the nationalization of the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall. But it was unable to bring forward any major measures in face of the monopolization of the time of Parliament by debates arising out of the crisis.

During the year the party fought only two by-elections. In March Vernon Hartshorn, of the South Wales Miners, contested Mid-Glamorgan against a Liberal only, getting 6,210 votes to 8,920 in a seat not previously challenged by Labour. In July A. G. Cameron, of the Carpenters, fought the Kirkdale division of Liverpool, which had been contested both in 1906 and in January, 1910, as well as much earlier, by T. R. Threlfall, in 1892. Against a Conservative only, Cameron lost by 3,427 to 4,268.

Before the end of the year came a second General Election; for the new King had refused to force the Liberal measures through by a threat to create peers without a further appeal to the electors. The Labour Party, more impecunious than ever, had again to face the challenge. This time it put only 62 candidates in the field, as against 85 in January; but it won two seats and emerged from the contest 42 strong, the Miners again contributing 17 to this total. On this occasion three defeats in Lancashire and Cheshire were more than counterbalanced by two gains in London and one each in Scotland, Cumberland, and the North-East. The composition of the party was not much changed: the most notable new recruit was George Lansbury, who won Bow and Bromley.

Once again, the Labour Party fought in alliance with the Liberals. Of its 42 Members, three were unopposed, and the other 39 had only Conservatives against them. Of its 20

defeated candidates, nine fought only Conservatives, whereas 11 had three-cornered contests. Independent Socialist candidatures were reduced to four—all unsuccessful three-cornered fights; and the 'Lib.-Lab.' contingent fell from seven to six elected Members.

The Parliament elected in December, 1910, remained in being for eight years—right through the World War. Its personnel thus determined the attitude of political Labour both during the critical years of pre-war industrial unrest and during the war itself. It is therefore worth while to pause and analyse it with some care. The leadership of the party in Parliament had been held since 1906 successively by Keir Hardie (1906), D. J. Shackleton of the textile workers (1907), Arthur Henderson (1908–9), and G. N. Barnes (1910). In 1911 Barnes was succeeded by Ramsay MacDonald, who was thereafter re-elected annually until 1914, when he resigned on the outbreak of war. The pre-war years were thus passed under MacDonald's continuous leadership, whereas up to 1911 it had been the practice of the party to make frequent changes.

Next to MacDonald, the outstanding figures in the party during these years were Hardie, Henderson, and Philip Snowden. But Hardie was growing old, and his health was bad; and Henderson, from the time in 1911 when he succeeded MacDonald as secretary of the Labour Party machine, occupied himself much more with the organization of the party in the constituencies than with House of Commons affairs. This left MacDonald practically undisputed in the parliamentary leadership. Snowden, regarded at this time as standing on the left wing of the party, chiefly because of his continual attempts to force the issue of Socialism to the front, was closely associated with MacDonald in the I.L.P., and, despite some bickerings, made no challenge to his position as leader.

MacDonald, in spite of his close connection with the I.L.P., belonged at this stage essentially to the moderate wing of the party. He sat for Leicester, a double constituency, as the colleague of a Liberal, and was very determined that no intrusion of a second Labour candidate should lose him the seat. He favoured close, though independent, collaboration with the

Liberals, and was keenly alive to the expediency of keeping on good terms with the still half-Liberal Trade Unionists who formed a large part of his parliamentary following. His own Socialism was definitely of an evolutionary type, and in his writings he had a fondness for biological analogies. He saw Socialism not primarily as a creed to be fought for, but rather as a tendency inherent in contemporary social development, which would advance almost of itself if given a gentle push in the right direction now and then.

With this intellectual attitude MacDonald combined a temperament markedly egoistic and impatient of criticism. He had all the feeling of being a great man—even a great gentleman ; and he had often an air, in Socialist circles, of moving consciously among his inferiors. Handsome and endowed with a magnificent orator's voice, he had, even in his prime, a habit of clouding his argument with many comfortable and eloquent words ; and he usually preferred evading a difficult issue to facing it squarely. In certain respects, he was an invaluable asset to the Labour Party during its formative years ; for he looked and behaved like a leader, even if he lacked the will to lead the party to any particular goal. In other respects he was a liability ; for the left rightly mistrusted him as a charlatan and a self-seeker, and he had no real power to guide the party aright through the difficulties that beset it in face of growing industrial unrest, suffragette militancy, and international tension which was the prelude to war.

Arthur Henderson, whom MacDonald superseded in the leadership, was of a very different type. Slow and unimaginative, he was fundamentally honest and modest about himself. He regarded himself always as the servant of the party, devoted above all else to its interests and to the preservation of unity in its ranks. A leading member of the Friendly Society of Ironfounders, he represented the Trade Union section of the party, and fully understood the value of maintaining his Trade Union connections. But he was also an experienced election manager, with a remarkable record as election agent for the Liberal Party ; and in his own constituency he had been a pioneer in building up a local Labour Party based on individual membership as well as on Trade Union support.

Entirely without the oratorial gifts and the ' manner ' which were MacDonald's stock in trade, Henderson had other assets which served him in good stead. He was a Dissenter and a teetotaller, a leading figure in the Brotherhood movement as well as in his Trade Union, and therewith an exceedingly astute party manager who knew how to impress himself upon a Labour Conference by plain speech. Henderson's peculiar qualities as an international statesman were not made manifest until much later ; but in these years, in addition to his work in building up the party in the constituencies, he did excellent service as a protagonist of factory reform and minimum wage legislation. The Trade Unions trusted him much more than they ever trusted MacDonald ; but Henderson himself regarded MacDonald's magnetic qualities as indispensable to the party and, so far from attempting to rival him, gave him every possible support on this ground even in his most equivocal dealings.

Keir Hardie, the real founder of the party, and its most respected leader, dropped into the background partly because of failing health, but much more because the strategy now required of the party did not at all suit his qualities. Hardie was above all else a protestant, happiest when he was flouting authority in protesting against some inhumane abuse, such as the treatment of the unemployed or the callousness of Parliament in face of some terrible colliery disaster. In the period after 1906, when the party had become respectable and was working as the ally of the Liberal Government, Hardie was noticeably uncomfortable in the leadership. He was glad to give place to other men who were less disturbed by a continual impulse to make scenes. Uncomfortably, Hardie gave his support to the new party line, and rallied to the support of MacDonald when he was attacked by critics on the left. His devotion to the I.L.P., and to the ' Labour Alliance ' which he had brought into being, kept him from joining the malcontents. But he sympathized with them, and on the particular issue of the suffrage he felt compelled to go his own way, and to support the militants in forcing the issue even when his party was prepared to shelve it in favour of other causes.

Hardie had much shrewdness, and no self-seeking at all.

But he was essentially a propagandist, and sentiment played a larger part than doctine in determining his actions. He was impatient of parliamentary procedure, which MacDonald studied and loved. He was much more at home as the lone ' member for the unemployed ' than as a leader in a party which had to watch its step because it could not risk turning out a Liberal Government. Hardie had been nurtured in Liberalism, but he had learned to hate it—particularly that Scottish brand of it which is, even to this day, so acutely hostile to the claims of Labour. Even apart from illness he was glad to renounce the leadership ; but he was often uncomfortable in the part, which commonly fell to him, of defending MacDonald's manœuvres against the attacks of the left.

Philip Snowden was the remaining leader of outstanding quality. Crippled and continually out of health, he had yet great endurance ; and his physical disabilities would not by themselves have been enough to prevent him from leading the party. But he was bitter, and doctrinaire, and was never in the habit of concealing his opinion of fools. Respected for his honesty, he was regarded as dangerous ; and his determination to force the Socialist issue at the cost of driving a wedge between Liberalism and Labour rendered him suspect to the right wing of the party. At the same time, during the critical years before the war he was estranged from the left by his entire disbelief in the potency of industrial action. He was the remorseless critic of strikes, as well as of social reforms designed to improve the working of capitalism. These opinions aligned him now against one section of the party and now against another, and prevented him from building up a personal following. Snowden and MacDonald were temperamentally much too far apart ever to have really liked each other ; but for the most part they worked together, because they had in common the belief that it was the mission of the I.L.P. tail to wag the Trade Union dog—to whatever purpose.

These four men stood out much above all the rest in the leadership of the Labour Party. Of the other leaders, D. J. Shackleton retired from Parliament in 1910 in order to accept a position in the Labour Department of the Board of Trade. Shackleton, the leader of the textile workers, had something

in common with Arthur Henderson—a solid common sense which he applied with effect to questions of social reform. But he lacked Henderson's breadth, and his power of entire devotion to the movement with which he had identified his life. G. N. Barnes, who led the party for a year and was to lead it again later, during the war, was a solid, worthy Trade Unionist who had been associated with the I.L.P. from its early days, but had none of the magnetism or drive requisite in a leader. J. R. Clynes, of the I.L.P. and the General Workers, was an admirable second-in-command—intelligent, honest, and at his best at moments of crisis, but without the physical or moral vigour needed to assert his claim to leadership. The rest were followers. John Hodge, the creator of the Steel Smelters' Union, had his heart in industrial rather than political affairs. Will Crooks, the eloquent East Ender, was a propagandist rather than a leader. The miners, despite their numerical preponderance in the party, furnished no one capable of political leadership. Enoch Edwards, their President, was a man of few words, admirable in negotiation, but incapable of adapting himself to the moods of the House of Commons. The most effective of the miners was William Brace, from South Wales, then reckoned as belonging to the advanced wing of the party, though the war was soon to carry him to its extreme right. James O'Grady, James Parker, and G. H. Roberts were Trade Unionists who had made their mark in the I.L.P. Will Thorne, the leader of the Gasworkers in the struggles of 1889, belonged to the S.D.F., but followed the call of his Union as Member for Hardie's old seat, South West Ham. He was a staunch Trade Unionist, without any pretensions to political finesse. George Lansbury, who had also come to the Labour Party by way of the S.D.F., was in 1910 a new recruit to Parliament, which he was soon to desert because he insisted on putting the women's claim to the vote ahead of the requirements of parliamentary opportunism.

Such was the Labour Party, as it emerged from the General Election of December, 1910. During the next four years it was to face many difficulties—rising industrial unrest as the cost of living increased without any parallel advance in the rates of wages ; the demand of the militant suffragists that

every other issue should be postponed to the vital question of votes for women ; the threat of rebellion in Ulster ; and the premonitory rumblings of European War. Amid all these dins of battle, it was necessary for the party to struggle for the legal recognition of its own right to exist ; and it had in addition to decide its attitude to the revised social policy, embodied in the National Insurance Act, which the Liberals, under Lloyd George's inspiration, put forward in the new Parliament. For after 1910 the Liberals, having won their victory over the House of Lords, embarked on a new social policy which threatened to divide the Labour forces into two antagonistic sections, the one seeing in the ' ninepence for fourpence ' of the Insurance Bill the promise of a new social order, and the other the first long step towards the institution of the ' Servile State '.

CHAPTER XVII

THE LABOUR UNREST

The National Insurance Act—The Irish Crisis—Syndicalism and the Servile State

THE years between 1911 and 1914 were a period of sharp and continuous industrial unrest. By 1910 trade had recovered from the depression of the two previous years, and by 1911 employment was expanding rapidly. Wage-rates, however, continued to lag seriously behind the rising cost of living. Food prices were about 9 per cent higher in 1910 and 1911 than in 1900, whereas wage-rates were no higher at all. In view of the rapidly expanding prosperity of industry, it was natural that such a situation should give rise to serious discontent.

It would, however, be an error to attribute the unrest of the years before the Great War exclusively to the fall in real wages. There were undoubtedly other forces at work. The Trade Unions had secured under the Trade Disputes Act of 1906 the restoration of the right to strike, which had been practically abrogated by the Taff Vale Judgment ; but the depression of 1908 and 1909 had allowed little opportunity of making use of the restored power. Consequently, when trade began to boom, there was an accumulation of working-class grievances, by no means only over wages, waiting to be put right ; and in fact many of the disputes of the next few years were not about wages, but about such matters as the recognition of collective bargaining, or the removal of various forms of workshop tyranny which the workers at last felt strong enough to resist.

Even this is by no means the complete explanation. For the unrest of these years was not confined to the working classes. Indeed, its most spectacular manifestation was the outbreak of

militancy on the part of the suffragettes, headed by Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst. Mrs. Pankhurst had founded the Women's Social and Political Union at Manchester in 1903; and from the autumn of 1905 this body adopted a policy of increasing militancy, beginning with the systematic howling down of speakers, especially Liberals, at public meetings and developing later into widespread sabotage by the firing of pillar-boxes and buildings, and into mass conflicts with the police in attempted raids on such places as Downing Street and the House of Commons. The demand of the militants, who were at war with the constitutional wing of the suffrage movement as well as with the Liberal Government, was that every other issue should be put aside until the women had been given the vote; and the Labour Party, because most of its leaders refused to accept this view, came in for a share of the attentions of the Pankhursts and their followers. Keir Hardie and, a little later, George Lansbury worked hard for the militants, until even they were estranged by the personal dictatorship assumed by Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughter. Under stress of this dictatorship, the militant movement split again and again. The W.S.P.U. had at the outset been fairly close to the I.L.P., of which Mrs. Pankhurst and her husband had been leading members from the beginning; but as the women's crusade developed the W.S.P.U. came to be more and more a middle- and even upper-class body of fanatical followers of the Pankhursts, who drifted right out of the Labour movement and became increasingly hostile to it. The Pethick Lawrences, Mrs. Despard, and Christabel's sister, Sylvia Pankhurst, were among those who broke away from the W.S.P.U. to create new movements, also militant, but repudiating the peculiar tactics of Mrs. Pankhurst and her favourite daughter; and these dissident sections of the suffrage organization remained in close touch with Labour. But they too were strongly critical of the lukewarm support given to the women's cause by Ramsay MacDonald and the official leadership of the party; and it was in protest against the official attitude that, in the autumn of 1912, George Lansbury insisted on resigning his seat at Bow and Bromley, and fighting it again on the suffrage issue. He was beaten, by 751, in a

straight fight with a Tory ; and only his great personal popularity saved him from a much worse defeat, for by that time the indiscriminate policy of the W.S.P.U. had brought the tactics of the militants into disfavour with the main body of the public.

The campaign of the militant suffragists has been stressed here as a manifestation of a spirit akin to the labour unrest which was contemporary with it. Both movements were indeed largely the outcome of disappointment after hopes raised high in the Liberal-Labour victory of 1906. This victory, ending a long period of Tory political ascendancy, let loose strong psychological forces. The workers expected something big to happen now that they had a real party of their own in the House of Commons : the women expected something big to happen now that the party traditionally hostile to their claims had been decisively defeated. When the Liberal Government showed no sign of helping on the women's cause ; when real wages continued to fall and industrial conditions got worse during the depression of 1908–09 ; when, in short, the expected blessings were not showered down, there was a revolt against parliamentarism—against the slow-moving machine of constitutional development, which appeared to have swallowed up the new party upon which the more actively minded workers had set their hopes.

These feelings were aggravated, instead of being relieved, by the constitutional crisis of 1909–11. The working classes for the most part saw the necessity of helping Lloyd George to carry his Budget and clip the wings of the House of Lords. But Asquith and some of the other Liberal leaders were so manifestly anxious to limit the scope of the conflict and not to allow Radicalism to advance too far that many of the leaders of working-class opinion were estranged and became keenly critical of the Labour Party's apparent subservience to a Government which plainly meant to do as little as it could. When in 1910 Liberals and Conservatives debated behind the closed doors of the Downing Street Constitutional Conference in an attempt to find an agreed solution ; when proposals were being bandied about for an actual Coalition Government of the two main parties ; when the Labour Party was shut

out of all these deliberations and called upon to back the Liberals without any share in shaping their policy—discontent inevitably ripened ; and unrest, even where it was purely economic in its origins, tended to take on a political complexion.

It is true that in 1911 the Labour Party did secure, in return for its support of the Government, one valuable concession—Payment of Members—which had figured in the Radical programme ever since Chartist days. But the concession, important as it was to a party crippled financially by the Osborne Judgment, was not of a character to impress the critics favourably. It could be represented as a preference by the Labour M.P.s for securing their own incomes instead of insisting on the unequivocal undoing of the effects of the Osborne Judgment. The Government did indeed introduce during the session a Bill designed to restore to the Trade Unions power to take political action on a voluntary basis ; but the Bill was dropped when a specially summoned Labour Conference had refused to accept it as a satisfactory solution.

For the rest, the session of 1911 was chiefly taken up, at first, by the Parliament Act, which limited the Lords' veto and, in its preamble, foreshadowed further proposals for altering the composition of the Second Chamber—proposals which never matured. The Shops Act, which in its original form had gone a long way towards meeting the Labour demands, was so cut about in the course of the session as to lose most of its value. It provided, in its final form, for regular meal-times and a weekly half-holiday ; but the more important question of the direct limitation of working hours was put aside.

After the Parliament Act, the Government's main measure of the year was the National Insurance Act, dealing primarily with health insurance but also instituting compulsory unemployment insurance in a limited group of trades. This measure, as we have seen, set the Labour movement at sixes and sevens. The scheme put forward by Lloyd George ran in many respects directly counter to the policy advocated by Labour, which had given a large measure of support to the proposals for the break-up of the Poor Law advocated in the famous Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission,

published in 1909. Mrs. Sidney Webb and George Lansbury had been the leading signatories to this report ; and the Fabian Society and Socialist organizations generally were at once up in arms against Lloyd George's rival scheme. In particular, there was strong objection in Labour circles to the contributory basis proposed for both health and unemployment services, and to the provision whereby the workmen's contributions were to be deducted from wages by the employers. Hilaire Belloc and other Liberals, as well as the Labour left wing, denounced this plan as a step towards the 'Servile State', and the Socialists set on foot a national campaign in favour of non-contributory social services, to be financed by taxation levied on the rich.

The controversy, had, however, another aspect. Lloyd George was careful to provide in his scheme that Trade Unions, as well as Friendly Societies and Insurance Companies, could take part in the administration of the proposed new health service ; and the Trade Unions were also offered the chance of administering unemployment insurance. The Unions saw, in this feature of the scheme, the possibility of a big chance not only of relieving their own funds but also of enrolling new recruits ; and their opposition to the contributory principle was from the first half-hearted and turned before long in many cases into actual support.

Thus the Labour Party found itself unhappily divided. A section, headed by Philip Snowden, fought hard against the Insurance Bill as an anti-Socialist measure. But the Trade Union official majority refused to follow this lead, with the consequence that the left wing in the country, rallying behind the Socialist critics, found new reasons for discontent with the behaviour of their parliamentary representatives. The Socialists, however, while they were practically united in disliking the Insurance Bill, were by no means at one on other issues. Philip Snowden, for example, was a strong opponent of industrial action, and never wearied of discoursing about the futility of strikes.

When, therefore, a great wave of industrial unrest swept over the country in the summer of 1911, there was disunity in the Socialist ranks. The strike movement began mainly

among the seamen, carters, and dock workers, recently re-organized in a National Transport Workers' Federation under the leadership of Tom Mann. Thence it spread to the railways, which had been full of discontent ever since 1907 on account of the successful sabotage by the railway companies of the Conciliation Scheme established by Lloyd George in that year as a response to a threat to strike. The railwaymen came out in 1911, first unofficially in support of the transport workers and then officially on a national scale. Asquith retaliated with a threat to use soldiers to run the railways ; and excitement ran to a high pitch. Lloyd George then did his best to repair the Prime Minister's mistake by attempting to arrange a settlement ; and MacDonald and Henderson, on behalf of the Labour Party, acted as intermediaries in the negotiations. The strikes ended in big victories all over the country for the seamen and transport workers, after riotous scenes in Liverpool and certain other centres. The railwaymen got an amended Conciliation Scheme which went some way towards granting Trade Union recognition—the real issue at stake in the struggle. But, although the Labour Party could claim some credit for its part in the negotiations, the attitude of its leaders had by no means satisfied the industrial militants, who, under the influence of Syndicalist ideas from France and Industrial Unionist ideas from the United States, were beginning to preach a doctrine of ' direct action ', and to urge that the workers would do better to pursue the class-struggle in the industrial field instead of relying on the devious courses of parliamentary procedure.

This wave of Syndicalism and its variants gathered force rapidly during the next two years, and widened the gulf between the left wing of the workers and the official leadership of both the Labour Party and the Trade Unions. The Trade Union leaders for the most part liked the new industrial militancy no better than the parliamentary leaders ; for it involved an outburst of unofficial strikes, often in violation of agreements which the leaders had signed, and in any case in defiance of official Trade Union authority. Nor were even the left-wing Socialists entirely happy. Hyndman and his following in the Social Democratic Federation were as firm

believers in the virtues of political as against industrial action as Snowden or MacDonald, though they differed as to the form which political action ought to take. The new industrial movement threw up its own leaders ; only a few of the old Socialist stalwarts, such as Tom Mann and, to a certain extent, George Lansbury and Ben Tillett, were actively associated with it.

Inside the Socialist movement, there had been already for some time a process of division and regrouping at work. The Social Democratic Federation had split more than once—the most important secession leading to the formation in 1903 of the Socialist Labour Party, with its headquarters in Glasgow, and militant industrialism as its outstanding principle. The S.L.P. remained very small ; but its following on the Clyde was one of the sources from which ideas of militant, class-war industrial action began to spread. In 1908 the S.D.F., growing increasingly critical of the Labour Party's dependence on the Liberals, changed its name to Social Democratic Party in an attempt to assert itself as the true class-war party of the workers ; but it was able, as we have seen, to put only a very few candidates into the field in the General Election of 1910, and their showing was very poor. Hyndman did fairly well at Burnley in January, but much worse in December ; but none of the other candidates did more than expose the weakness of the Socialist vote.

There were, however, by this time forces of political discontent outside the S.D.P., with which Hyndman and his colleagues had to deal. Victor Grayson had lost his Colne Valley seat in January, 1910, when he was at the bottom in a three-cornered contest ; and in December, standing for Kennington as a Socialist in a three-cornered contest, he got only 408 votes. But inside the I.L.P. and among the adherents of Blatchford's *Clarion* there were dissentient groups which repudiated the official Labour policy ; and in 1911 these groups joined forces with the S.D.P. to form a new British Socialist Party—which was in effect only the S.D.P. with some small additions. The fusion served, however, to introduce fresh dissensions ; for the B.S.P. came to include very discrepant elements. Blatchford was already preoccu-

pied largely with denunciation of the German menace, and in this attitude Hyndman largely agreed with him. But most of the rank and file of the B.S.P. consisted of left-wing Socialists, who were thinking not of the coming war with Germany but of the class-war against British capitalism. The B.S.P. nevertheless held together until after the actual outbreak of war, when the rank and file defeated Hyndman, who thereupon seceded and formed a National Socialist Party which later resumed the old name of the S.D.F.

During 1911 the Labour Party fought four by-elections, all three-cornered. In March John Robertson, of the Scottish Miners' Federation, fought North-East Lanarkshire, and came in a bad third, the Liberal winning the seat. In September T. McKerrell fought Kilmarnock, with a similar result. In October W. C. Anderson, of the I.L.P., was at the bottom of the poll in Keighley; and in November W. C. Robinson repeated this experience in the double constituency of Oldham. More interesting was the by-election in July in South-West Bethnal Green, in which John Scurr, as an independent Socialist, stood against C. F. G. Masterman, Lloyd George's principal lieutenant in the matter of the Insurance Bill. Masterman was elected against the Tory by a narrow majority of 184, which exceeded Scurr's total poll of 134. The extreme left might have some influence in the industrial field; but politically it was helpless against the established party machines.

In the following year the Labour Party was involved in five contests, apart from George Lansbury's suffrage fight in Bow and Bromley. In June William Lunn of the Yorkshire Miners was third at Holmfirth, and in July J. H. Holmes, of the Railway Servants, was similarly placed at Crewe. In the same month Enoch Edwards's old seat at Hanley was lost to an advanced Liberal, R. L. Outhwaite, Samuel Finney, the Miners' nominee, being left badly at the bottom of the poll. In August Dr. J. H. Williams was at the bottom in East Carmarthen; and in September R. Brown, of the Scottish Miners, shared the same fate at Midlothian. In January, 1912, an unofficial Labour candidate in Carmarthen Boroughs mustered only 149 votes. In every one of these cases the

contest was three-cornered. The Liberals were giving away no more seats to the Labour Party, which had everywhere either to stand against them or to let the seat go by default, as was actually done in November at Bolton.

This was the year of the miners' national strike for a guaranteed minimum wage. The strength of the Miners' Federation in the ranks of the Labour Party ensured that the political wing of the movement would give the fullest support to the strikers ; and the party did its best to keep the miners' case before the House and to get the Federation's demands embodied in the Act which the Government was compelled to pass in order to settle the strike. But the attempt to embody in the Bill the actual minimum wage-rates claimed by the Federation was unsuccessful ; and the Act, though it ended the strike, fell a long way short of meeting the miners' demands. The party also did what it could to help the London transport workers, who came out on strike in an attempt to enforce recognition of the Transport Workers' Federation, with which the Port of London Authority was refusing to deal. The collapse of the strike dealt a heavy blow to the industrial left wing, of which the Transport Workers had come to be regarded as the protagonists since their victories of the year before.

Apart from the strikes, the main questions before Parliament in 1912 were the reversal of the Osborne Judgment and the reform of the franchise. The Government again introduced a Bill designed to restore political powers to the Unions, subject to ' contracting-out ' by members who did not wish to contribute to the political fund. The Labour Party and the Trade Unions stood out for complete reversal of the effects of the Osborne Judgment, and it was not until early in 1913 that they gave way and agreed to accept the Government's proposal as an instalment of their demands. The Trade Union Bill was then passed rapidly into law ; and thereafter any Union could take political action, provided that it first obtained the authority of the members by a ballot vote, and subsequently exempted from the political levy all members who notified their unwillingness to subscribe.

The second big issue of the year was franchise reform. The

Government introduced a Franchise Bill which went almost the whole way to Manhood Suffrage, but still excluded women. The question then arose whether the Bill could be so amended as to bring women within its scope. The Speaker ruled that it could not ; and the Bill was finally withdrawn in face of the declared inability of many suffragists to vote for it. This was the connection in which George Lansbury resigned his seat, and stood again as a protagonist of the women's claims.

In 1913 there was not one trade dispute comparable in extent with the miners' struggle of the previous year. But there were very many smaller disputes ; and in the latter part of the year acute conflict developed inside the Labour movement over the strike and lock-out in Dublin, of which James Larkin, the leader of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, became the central figure. The particular issue brought to a head by the Dublin dispute was that of the sympathetic strike. Larkin's policy was to build up a consolidated Union, embracing workers from many different trades, and to use the power of the transport workers and other key groups to stop supplies of materials or deliveries of finished goods to or from firms which refused to recognize the Union, or to accept its terms. In pursuance of this policy, Larkin sought to induce members of other Unions, most of which had their headquarters in England, to refuse to handle 'tainted goods' ; and the National Union of Railwaymen in particular complained that, if such a policy were to be comprehensively applied, its members would find themselves involved in nearly every dispute, no matter in what industry it occurred. The British Trade Union leaders in general objected strongly to Larkin's militant class-war policy ; but when the Dublin employers, headed by William Martin Murphy, declared war on the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union and attempted a policy of extermination, it became impossible for them to refuse support. Food ships were sent by the British Labour and Co-operative movements to help feed the starving Dublin workers and their children ; and British leaders went to Dublin and attempted to settle the dispute on a basis of compromise. This, however, was to the liking neither of the

Dublin employers nor of Larkin ; and Larkin, dissatisfied with the help given by the British Unions, toured Great Britain denouncing the Trade Union moderates and calling insistently for a more aggressive industrial policy.

Meanwhile, in Parliament, the centre of interest had shifted to the struggle over Irish Home Rule and the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. Bills dealing with both these questions had been introduced in 1912 only to be thrown out by the House of Lords ; and in 1913 these measures met the same fate for a second time. A Plural Voting Bill introduced by the Government was also rejected by the House of Lords ; but the Trade Unions did in this session secure a modified restoration of their political rights, having at length made up their minds to accept a measure which fell a long way short of their claims rather than wait indefinitely for a complete reversal of the effects of the Osborne Judgment.

The Trade Union Act of 1913 was wider in its bearing than the Judgment which it was designed to modify. As against the view that Trade Unions could lawfully engage in no other activities than those specified in the Acts of 1871 and 1876, it affirmed their right to take part in any lawful activity for which they might choose to provide in their rules, but left them subject to special restrictions in respect of activities of a political nature. Political activities, which were defined in the Act, could be undertaken only if the Union contemplating them first took a ballot vote of its members and secured a majority of those voting, and thereafter drew up a special set of political rules, which required the approval of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies. Moreover, political activities had to be paid for out of a special political fund, and opportunity had to be given to any member who did not wish to contribute to this fund to 'contract out', without suffering on that account any diminution of his other rights and privileges within the Union.

This was, from the standpoint of the Trade Unions, an unsatisfactory compromise ; for they objected strongly to being made subject to special disabilities which did not apply to other types of private association. But the Liberal Government would go no further, and the Unions had to choose

between acceptance and the indefinite prolongation of a state of affairs which left them without any political rights at all.

Preoccupied with Home Rule and Welsh Disestablishment, and increasingly at loggerheads with Labour on account of the prevalent industrial unrest, the Liberal Government had practically ceased by 1913 to make further concessions to the Labour Party's demands. The centre of political gravity was indeed shifting fast from the House of Commons to the country at large. Strikes, suffragist demonstrations and outrages, and in Ulster open preparations for armed rebellion overshadowed the attempts of the parliamentary Labour Party to secure attention for factory reform, or the feeding of necessitous school children, or even the legal minimum wage or the better treatment of the unemployed. Parliamentary Labour was too weak to play an effective part in the negotiations between the two older parties over the Home Rule Bill, or to make its voice much heard above the clamour of the contending parties. The party was, moreover, unlucky. It failed to secure even a single place in the ballot for private members' bills, and was reduced to introducing its proposals under the ten-minute rule, with no prospect of getting them adequately debated—much less passed into law.

During 1913 the Labour Party officially fought only three by-elections ; and in all three both Conservative and Liberal candidates were in the field. In March, at Houghton-le-Spring, William House, of the Durham Miners, came in third, a few hundred votes behind the defeated Conservative, but 2,765 behind the Liberal. In November, at Keighley, the result was much the same, with a narrower margin between the votes. W. Bland was the Labour candidate. In December, in South Lanarkshire, T. Gibb, of the Scottish Miners, was much more decisively at the bottom, and the Conservative won the seat by a narrow majority over the Liberal.

These by-elections were, however, much less interesting than those in which no official Labour candidate was put forward. The first of these occurred in June, at Leicester, the double constituency held by Ramsay MacDonald and a Liberal. There was a keen desire locally to fight the second seat, which had once been Henry Broadhurst's ; but party head-

quarters frowned upon this wish, for fear of endangering MacDonald's position at a General Election. The candidate proposed was George Banton, a leading figure in the local I.L.P. ; but the head office of the I.L.P. also declared against the contest. The recently formed British Socialist Party thereupon put forward one of its own leaders, Alderman E. R. Hartley, against whom the Liberal election agent promptly put forward a manifesto in which he professed to have the authority of the Labour Party for repudiating Hartley's candidature. This statement led to a storm : it was revealed that the Liberal manifesto was based on statements made privately by G. H. Roberts, who had been sent to Leicester with Arthur Henderson by the Labour Party Executive to investigate the position. Roberts was forced to apologize for what he had said ; but clearly he had been rather indiscreet in blurting out what was meant than astray in representing the Executive's view. In the result, Hartley got 2,580 votes, against 10,863 for the Liberal and 9,270 for the Conservative.

Another difficult situation arose over the Chesterfield by-election at the beginning of August. The vacancy was caused by the death of James Haslam, of the Derbyshire Miners, who had been returned as a Labour Party nominee at the General Election. The Derbyshire Miners adopted as his successor one of their officials, Barnet Kenyon, who was a staunch Liberal, had promised to address the local Liberal Association annually if it refrained from opposing him, and had appointed the Liberal Secretary to act as his election agent. Subsequently, after negotiations with the Miners' Federation, Kenyon agreed to run as a Labour candidate pure and simple ; but he proceeded to describe himself in the division as the ' Labour and Progressive ' candidate, and to make use of the Liberal machine for his campaign. The Labour Party Executive, which had been considering the endorsement of his candidature in the light of his undertaking, thereupon refused endorsement, against the protests of the Derbyshire Miners' Association, but with the support of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. Under these circumstances John Scurr, who had fought Masterman at Bethnal Green two years before, took the field as an independent Socialist candidate ; but he polled

only 583 votes, against Kenyon's 7,725 and the Conservative's 5,539. The affair was serious for the Labour Party, because it threatened other Labour seats which were held by miners who still kept up close associations with the Liberal Party.

In November yet another Socialist, J. G. Butler, fought Reading in the absence of an official Labour candidate. He was a long way behind his rivals, the Tory winning by a clear majority over both the other candidates. The only other contest of the year in which 'Labour' was in any way involved was in June at Wandsworth, when Havelock Wilson, the Seamen's leader, who had been one of the three original Labour Independent M.P.s of 1892, fought as a 'Lib.-Lab.' and got 7,088 votes in a straight fight against the Tory's 13,425.

It will be convenient at this point to bring the record of by-elections up to August, 1914. During the first seven months of 1914 the party officially fought three by-elections. In January, in North-West Durham, G. H. Stuart, of the Postmen's Federation, was at the bottom in a three-cornered fight, 2,200 votes behind the Liberal, and 500 behind the Tory. In February, J. N. Bell, Secretary of the National Amalgamated Union of Labour, was more heavily beaten at Leith, by over 1,800, the Conservative winning by the narrow margin of 16 votes. In May, the death of W. E. Harvey, of the Derbyshire Miners, caused another contest in that county. J. Martin, of the same Union, was put forward as official Labour candidate; but the Liberals, who had not opposed Harvey, decided to fight the seat, and Martin was at the bottom of the poll, the Conservative winning by a narrow majority over the Liberal.

In addition to these contests, John Scurr twice took the field in 1914 as an independent Socialist, backed chiefly by the *Daily Herald*, then under George Lansbury's control. In February, he again fought Masterman, who had been appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in South-West Bethnal Green; and on this occasion, though he polled only 316 votes, he probably deprived Masterman of the seat, as the Conservative won by only 24. In May, Scurr pursued the defeated Masterman to Ipswich, where he was again

beaten—this time by 532, as against Scurr's total poll of 395. The independent Socialist strength was not impressive ; but it may well be that for a second time Scurr had kept Lloyd George's leading henchman out of the House, by causing voters to abstain because they were reluctant to vote against a Socialist, even if they would not vote for him when he had no official backing.

It will be seen that, after the election of December, 1910, the collaborative relation between the Liberal and Labour Parties had completely broken down, except in certain double constituencies. The Liberals were not prepared to allow Labour men any further seats ; and they were disposed to fight in constituencies held by former 'Lib.-Labs.' who had joined the Labour Party, wherever death or resignation led to a by-election. In the House of Commons, the Labour Party was still voting mainly on the side of the Government ; but in the constituencies collaboration had virtually ceased to exist. If there had been a General Election in or about 1914, the Labour Party would have been hard put to it to hold many of the seats which it had won on the basis of combining the Labour and Liberal votes. In return, it could have endangered many Liberal seats held on a similar tenure. Possibly, if there had come a General Election instead of a war, some sort of pact would have been arranged. But the general leftward drift of Labour opinion would have made this difficult ; and a probable consequence of any pact would have been a multiplication of independent Socialist candidatures.

The year 1914, like its predecessor, was dominated by the Irish crisis, right up to the outbreak of war at the beginning of August. The passing for a third time in the Commons of the Home Rule and Welsh Disestablishment Bills was followed by a renewed constitutional crisis, in which the King intervened to bring together representatives of the British and Irish parties ; but the Labour Party was shut out from the ensuing conference, as it had been from that of three years before. The party protested against this exclusion, and also against the intervention of the King as a breach of the Crown's supposed political neutrality ; but it was not in a position to make its protests effective. It protested again when the Liberals, intimi-

dated by Ulster's threats of armed resistance and by doubts whether the high officers of the British Army would obey if they were called upon to coerce the Northern Irish Covenanters, set about amending their own Home Rule Bill; but before the conflict could come to a head the entire controversy was temporarily swept aside by the outbreak of war.

Meanwhile, industrial prosperity, having reached its peak in 1913, was beginning to recede. A number of Trade Unions, including the National Union of Railwaymen, which had been formed at the beginning of 1913 by the fusion of three separate societies, were ready in 1914 with new programmes of demands. Trouble was threatening in the Scottish mining industry, and a big building strike was actually in progress in London and the Home Counties when war was declared. Had the war not cut short these developments, the industrial struggle would certainly have entered, in 1914 and 1915, upon a new phase. For the workers, who had been able between 1911 and 1914 to venture upon aggressive strike action at a time when employers were making high profits and were therefore very reluctant to face an interruption of work, would soon have found themselves fighting under very different conditions, with all the disadvantages of a falling market. It is not profitable now to consider how this change of circumstances would have reacted upon the movement—whether it would have led to an intensification of industrial conflict or to a swing-back of the pendulum towards political action. There were too many forces at work for speculation on the question to lead to any clear conclusion.

What is plain is that, over the whole period between Lloyd George's Budget of 1909 and the outbreak of war in 1914, the Labour Party was compelled to work under very difficult political conditions. It was the plaything of a series of constitutional crises in which it had no power to play more than a secondary part. Placed apparently in a position of great influence, in that its votes were at times indispensable to the Liberal Government, it was unable to use its strategic advantage because it was on the side of the Liberals over the particular issues involved—to say nothing of the narrower considerations which kept it tied to the Liberal Government until the

effects of the Osborne Judgment had been at least in part undone.

These considerations largely explain the Labour Party's apparent ineffectiveness during the years which followed its initial triumphs of 1906. But they are not the whole explanation ; for there were other forces at work. The appearance of the Labour Party, thirty strong, as a result of the election of 1906 caused, for a brief period, an over-estimation of its real strength by the leaders of the older parties. It took them a year or two to realize that nearly all the Labour M.P.s held their seats by Liberal as well as Labour votes, and that many of the Trade Unionists in the party were still by conviction much more Liberals than adherents of any new-fangled Socialist doctrine. When these facts were realized, and when it was seen that the official leaders of Labour were exposed to revolt from the more extreme elements among their own following, the Labour Party's political stock fell promptly, and the Liberals, under Lloyd George, set to work to devise alternative social policies which would weaken the Labour appeal, as an alternative to the making of further concessions to the more aggressive wing of the party.

In addition to this discounting of Labour claims by the Liberals, the Labour Party suffered seriously from internal weaknesses. It had no clear or consistent social policy beyond a number of specific reforms. It was predominantly a Trade Union, and not a Socialist, party ; and in this it reflected accurately the mood of the great majority of electors, who gave short shrift to candidates who appeared before them on a pure Socialist platform. The British workers in the decade before the war of 1914 had many causes for discontent ; and they were ready enough to assert their grievances by industrial action as opportunity arose. But only a very small minority among them were disposed to see in their troubles a rooted disease of capitalism itself, requiring a quick and thorough change of economic system. The few who did see this in the situation were very articulate, and had much success in placing themselves at the head of the forces of industrial discontent. But they did not, except occasionally and on particular issues, command any large mass of support. To the extent to which

a party can be said to be doing its job if it interprets correctly the mood of the majority of those who vote for it, the Labour Party cannot be blamed for not taking up a more distinctive position in the crises of these years. If it had taken up a more militant attitude, it would not only have fared much worse at the polls, but would also have run the risk of letting the House of Lords win its battle against the Government, and of spoiling the chances of Home Rule in Ireland. Whether it would have been worth while for the party to run these risks is a moot point—it is the same point as is endlessly argued between those who say that it is needful above all else to preserve Trade Union unity, and those who hold that a small, militant Socialist Party, with a clear-cut policy, would be much more useful than a larger party based on political compromise. Whatever the answer, the British Labour movement had made its choice in 1900, when the I.L.P. and the Fabian Society joined forces with the Trade Unions to create the Labour Representation Committee. Over the next fourteen years the logical consequences of this policy were being worked out.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE LABOUR PARTY MACHINE

The Development of Labour Party Organization, 1900–14—The Labour Party, the I.L.P., and the Trade Unions

THE preceding chapters have dealt mainly with the record of the Labour Party in Parliament. But the party is, of course, and has been from the beginning, not only a party in Parliament, but also a nation-wide organization, primarily for electoral purposes but having also other activities both in local government and altogether outside the electoral field. There was not, indeed, throughout the period up to 1914, any local organization of the party such as was built up later by Arthur Henderson under the new Constitution of 1918. Except in a very few constituencies, where particular Members of Parliament had created their own local organizations, there was no way of joining the Labour Party as an individual member. The Independent Labour Party, supplemented in some areas by a local Fabian Society, took the place largely occupied in later years by the Individual Members' Section of the Local Labour Party. An individual who wanted to join the party otherwise than through a Trade Union joined the I.L.P. or the Fabian Society ; and this naturally gave the I.L.P. especially a position of importance in the party machine which it was never able to regain after Henderson had begun to build up the Labour Party itself on a basis of individual membership as well as Trade Union and Socialist affiliation.

The Labour Representation Committee, at its inception in 1900, was purely federal. At its first Annual Conference, in February, 1901, there were represented the I.L.P., with 13,000 members, the Social Democratic Federation, with 9,000, and the Fabian Society, with 861, exclusive of the membership of a number of local Fabian Societies which were not directly

affiliated. There were 34 Trade Unions, representing 340,000 members; and there were five Trades Councils, those of Birmingham, Bradford, Leeds, Leicester, and Manchester, claiming to represent between them 94,000 members. The largest Unions affiliated at this stage were the Railway Servants (60,000), the Gasworkers (48,000), the Boot and Shoe Operatives (32,000), and the Ironfounders (18,000). There was no local organization apart from the branches of the Socialist Societies and the few Trades Councils which had formally linked up with the party; but there were informal relations with Trades Councils in some other areas.

At the second Annual Conference in February, 1902, the number of Trade Unions had risen to 79, actually represented, and the total number affiliated was 127. Of Trades Councils, 22 were represented, and 49 in all were affiliated to the party. Trade Union affiliated membership was given as 847,000, including societies which did not send delegates, but Trades Council membership had ceased to be given in the Report. The Socialist Societies had shrunk to two by the secession of the S.D.F. The combined membership of the I.L.P. and the Fabian Society was given as nearly 14,000. Big new Trade Union Affiliations included the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners (62,000), the Boilermakers (49,000), the Amalgamated Engineers (84,000), and the United Textile Factory Workers' Association, mainly in Lancashire (103,000). The affiliation list was beginning to look fairly representative of the Trade Union world, apart from the Miners. The Trades Councils now covered a considerable part of the country; but Scotland was still outside, organized in the separate Scottish Workers' Representation Committee.

By this time a new problem of organization was beginning to arise. In a number of areas there had been formed, for local government as well as for parliamentary purposes, local Workers' Election Committees, federal bodies uniting the local Trades Councils with the local branches of the two Socialist Societies. These bodies were beginning to ask for national recognition; but the Executive held the view that, as it had been its policy to recognize the Trades Councils and, further, as the new bodies were "really only joint committees of

societies already affiliated ", recognition could not be granted. Thus, the primary step towards the creation of Local Labour Parties received no official endorsement.

In the following year there was no great change, beyond some further growth of membership. But in 1905 the question of local organization came up again. The Executive noted " the remarkable growth of local Labour Representation Committees ", and recommended that " in constituencies which are not covered by a Trades Council the Labour Association for the whole constituency be eligible for affiliation on the same basis as Trades Councils if it accepts the constitution and policy of the national L.R.C." A proposal to create special women's organizations in the constituencies also received the approval of the Executive.

Accordingly, in 1906 two local Labour Representation Committees, both from Durham, made their appearance among the affiliated societies—the very thin end of the wedge of Local Labour Party organization. In the following year the number of affiliated local L.R.C.s had risen to 14 ; and the Executive was able to report the foundation of the Women's Labour League as a propagandist auxiliary of the party. By 1908 there were 20 affiliated local L.R.C.s, and the Scottish Labour Party (the Scottish Workers' Representation Committee under a new name) had also affiliated ; and the Executive was also recommending that the Women's Labour League should be accepted as an affiliated organization. Meanwhile, by 1907, the affiliated Trade Union membership had exceeded a million for the first time ; and the membership of the two Socialist Societies had climbed gradually from the 14,000 of 1902 to 22,000.

In 1908 the Miners' Federation decided to approach the Labour Party with a view to affiliation ; and this important accession took place in the following year. By that time there were 40 local bodies affiliated, in addition to 94 Trades Councils ; and the local political federations were for the first time described as Local Labour Parties. By the beginning of 1910 the number of Local Labour Parties had risen to 63, partly as a result of the merging of the Scottish Labour Party with the main body.

Thereafter, the Trade Union figures became confused owing to the operation of the Osborne Judgment. At the beginning of 1912 the Labour Party claimed a total membership of 1,895,000, of whom 1,858,000 were in affiliated Trade Unions, 31,000 in the two Socialist Societies, 5,000 in the Women's Labour League, and 1,000 in the solitary local Co-operative Society which had by then joined the party. There had been continual efforts from the beginning to bring in the Co-operatives ; but the decision of the Co-operative Congress continued to go against political action until 1917, when the subjection of the Societies to Excess Profits Tax, added to other wartime grievances, led to the establishment of the Co-operative Party as the Labour Party's independent ally.

After 1912 no further figures of membership are available for the Trade Unions. The Socialist Societies continued to grow slowly, reaching a membership of 33,000 in 1914. By the beginning of that year there were 73 Local Labour Parties and 85 Trades Councils affiliated to the party, in addition to 161 Trade Unions, two Socialist Societies, one Co-operative Society, and the Women's Labour League.

The true pioneers of local Labour organization within the party were not so much the federal bodies established by the local Socialist branches and the Trades Councils as the Local Labour Associations founded in a few areas by particular M.P.s on a basis of local membership. The earliest examples of this type of organization were Arthur Henderson's Labour and Progressive Association at Barnard Castle, largely taken over from the earlier Liberal Association of the days when Henderson had been the Liberal agent for the constituency, and the Labour Leagues in Poplar and Woolwich, which were the instruments of Will Crooks's campaigns for the London County Council and the House of Commons. These bodies organized local Labour opinion on a basis not explicitly Socialist, whereas in most areas individual association with the party was still possible only through one or other of the Socialist bodies.

In general, this situation meant that the I.L.P. continued almost everywhere as the only active agency of the party in the localities, except at election times. Except when an

election was pending, the local Trades Council usually concerned itself but little with political affairs ; and any sort of continuous propaganda was regarded as falling within the province of the I.L.P. In the mining areas especially there was hardly any political organization ; for in the days of 'Lib.-Lab.'-ism the local electoral work had been done largely by the Liberal and Radical Associations, and the Miners' M.P.s were slow in creating any new machinery after the Miners' Federation had transferred its allegiance to the Labour Party.

Thus, to a great extent, despite the numerical preponderance of the Trade Unions, the I.L.P. continued to be the effective element in the Labour Party right up to 1914. Hardie, MacDonald, and Snowden were all associated primarily with the I.L.P. : of the leading figures in the party, only Henderson and Crooks, who were both Fabians, were not I.L.P. men, and each of these had seen the necessity of creating a local Labour machine of his own. MacDonald, as leader of the Labour Party in Parliament and the most influential member of the I.L.P., occupied a key position, and made himself adept at the manipulation of the two machines, checkmating leftist tendencies in the I.L.P. by emphasizing the need for Labour unity, and combating excessive corporatism on the part of the Trade Unions by reminding them of their dependence on the devoted service of the I.L.P. propagandists. The alliance was at times uneasy ; but during the pre-war years it was held together by a common disapproval of forces further to the left—of the class-war doctrinaires of the British Socialist Party, and of the militant industrialists who applauded the 'strike-mongering' of Tom Mann and James Larkin.

It was a sign of the local preponderance of the I.L.P. and to a smaller extent of the Fabians that, right up to 1914, the Labour Party itself remained relatively inactive in matters of Local Government. The I.L.P., on the other hand, was very active in this field, as it had been from a period prior to the formation of the L.R.C. in 1900. From the middle 'nineties onwards the I.L.P. had included in its annual reports a list of its members who had secured election to municipal councils, boards of guardians, and other local elective bodies, and had

called from time to time conferences of these representatives in order to secure the pursuance of a common policy. The Fabians had also specialized in questions of Local Government, but had pursued a somewhat different policy, especially in London. The Fabian policy of ' permeation ' involved both the attempt to get members of the Society elected to local bodies as ' Progressives ' (e.g. on the London County Council, where the Progressive Party was largely under Fabian influence), or even as Liberals. But at the same time the Fabian Society steadily fed the I.L.P. and Trade Union members of local authorities with collectivist and social reform propaganda, and contributed largely to the rapid spread, during the 'nineties, of what came to be known as ' Gas and Water Socialism '—that is, a policy of municipalization and of the extension of services directly provided by the agencies of Local Government.

By 1907 the I.L.P. was able to record among its members, besides seven Members of Parlaiment, 19 Elective Auditors, 220 members of Boards of Guardians or Scottish Parish Councils, 23 County Councillors, 102 Parish Councillors in England and Wales, 240 Town Councillors, 26 Rural District and 169 Urban District Councillors, and 22 members of School Boards in Scotland. Thereafter, Labour representation increased rapidly, but it became difficult to distinguish I.L.P. representatives from those put forward by Local Labour Parties and other local bodies. In 1914, the year of the I.L.P.'s ' Coming-of-Age ', it was recorded that the local elections of the previous year had resulted in 85 net gains for Labour, of which 44 were attributable to I.L.P. candidates. Out of 494 Labour candidates, the I.L.P. had been responsible for 228 ; and of 196 successful candidates, 109 had stood under the auspices of the I.L.P.

Yet, even in 1914, the Labour political machine existed effectively in only a small number of areas. The I.L.P. Conference of that year was attended by delegates from 244 branches, but in a number of cases several of them came from the same area. Most of the rural and many of the mining areas were still unorganized, either by the I.L.P. or by the Labour Party ; and in the great majority of constituencies

there was still no thought of putting forward a Labour candidate for the House of Commons. Labour was still definitely a minority party, in Local Government as well as in national affairs. Over most of the country, the Liberals and the Conservatives still fought for political predominance without regarding Labour as a serious rival. Only with the disintegration of Liberalism during the war, and the great increase in Trade Union membership due to war conditions, was Labour able to set up as a nation-wide party, with some sort of organization in nearly every constituency. And that achievement was not secured until the Labour Party had reorganized itself on a basis of local membership, and had taken a large part of the work of constituency organization out of the hands of the I.L.P.

The period immediately before the war of 1914 was thus the great age of I.L.P. influence. But this influence had already changed its character. To the period of Keir Hardie's leadership had succeeded the period of Ramsay MacDonald's ; and the change was from Socialist propagandism to parliamentary opportunism under the stress of the recurrent constitutional crises of the pre-war years. MacDonald, as well as Hardie, preached Socialism ; but, unlike Hardie, he did not agitate for it. It was no part of his nature to put himself at the head of a crusade on behalf of the unemployed, or to make scenes in the House of Commons in order to draw attention to their wrongs. MacDonald's ascendancy was decorously parliamentary : he sought to impress himself and his party upon the electors by demonstrating their fitness to govern according to all the precedents of parliamentary usage.

This change infuriated the left wing—the more so because the parliamentary situation of the years after 1909 made it impossible for the Labour Party to press home its own demands without endangering the position of the Government. The continuance of the older strategy of agitation might at any time after 1910 have brought the Government down, and would certainly have involved the loss of Liberal support in many constituencies which could be held for Labour only with the aid of the Liberal vote. The MacDonald strategy was quite intelligible ; but it did not fit in at all well with an

industrial situation in which rising unrest inevitably handed over the leadership to the more militant elements in the Trade Unions.

Nevertheless, the Labour Party held together and made progress, even under the added handicap of the Osborne Judgment. Revolt was piecemeal, and the workers who were ready to follow a militant industrial leadership did not for the most part carry their *ad hoc* militancy into politics. The British Socialist Party was hardly larger or more influential than the S.D.F. George Lansbury and the *Daily Herald* could give an excellent lead to strikers ; but they could command only a handful of votes for independent Socialist candidates. The mass support of Labour candidates came from the Trade Unions and the I.L.P., and the leadership of both remained impervious to the new extremist gospels. The Labour Party, right up to 1914, was not a Socialist, but a Trade Union and social reform party, looking to the Liberals, under pressure, to carry into effect instalments of its demands. It had no doctrinal basis, though it had in practice largely adopted the Fabian notions of evolutionary progress towards collectivism, and would on occasion endorse vaguely Socialist resolutions almost without opposition. Its attitude might have defined itself more sharply but for the necessity of supporting the Liberals first against the House of Lords and then over Irish Home Rule ; but, even apart from this necessity, it would hardly have become fully Socialist before 1914. For the governing factor, despite the setback to real wages after 1900, was still the almost unquestioned belief of the ordinary man in the stability of British capitalism, which met, until after the outbreak of war, no real challenge to its position in the markets of the world. As long as this predominance of British capitalism remained unshaken, the main body of the British working class was much more disposed to take capitalism for granted, and to seek for amelioration within it, than to offer any basic challenge to it, except on particular occasions and in the industrial field. If the Labour Party was moderate and gradualist, it reflected accurately, in being so, what was still the habitual attitude of the ordinary worker.

CHAPTER XIX

EPILOGUE

Labour and Politics, 1900 to 1940

THIRTY-TWO years ago, or thereabouts, while I was still at school, I joined the Labour Party. At least, I became a member of it, though strictly speaking I did not join it, because in those days there were no Local Labour Parties which it was possible for an individual to join. In 1908 the Labour Party was still simply a federation, in which a number of Trade Unions had combined with certain Socialist bodies for the purpose of getting independent Labour representatives returned to Parliament and to local authorities. This federal body, previously known as the Labour Representation Committee, had adopted the name ' Labour Party ' only in 1906, when it had won a startling electoral victory and come back to the House of Commons thirty strong, as compared with the two seats won in 1900 and the four held, thanks to by-election successes, at the time when Parliament was dissolved.

In 1908, then, the Labour Party was virtually a new party, trying out its new-found strength and only beginning upon the task of building up the political Labour movement as a nation-wide force. In one or two places, such as Woolwich and Barnard Castle, Will Crooks and Arthur Henderson had created Local Labour Parties with individual members not unlike the Labour Parties of to-day. But bodies of this type were rarities ; and over most of the country Local Labour Parties hardly existed at all. Where they did exist, they were mere federations of local Trade Union branches with the local I.L.P., and perhaps, here and there, one or two other local Socialist and Labour societies. In many places the political as well as the industrial work of the movement was in the hands of the local Trades Council, or of a local Trades and Labour

Council which was simply the Trades Council *plus* the local I.L.P. branch and perhaps one or two other bodies.

So, when I wanted to become actively connected with the political Labour movement, I joined the I.L.P. That was the natural thing to do ; for in those days the I.L.P. played a vitally important part in the work of the Labour Party as a whole. Over a large part of the country, to all intents and purposes the I.L.P. *was* the Labour Party, and had in its hands almost the entire work of political propaganda on the party's behalf. The keen Trade Unionist who wanted to work for the Labour Party, as well as the Socialist who was not eligible to join a Trade Union, became an I.L.P. member almost as a matter of course. It was the I.L.P. that organized meetings, undertook canvassing, supplied Socialist literature, and carried on the day-to-day work of propaganda for the Labour Party. The Local Labour Parties, even where they existed, did little except at election times. There were no regular Labour Party ward meetings, no Women's Sections, no individual members at all except in a very few places. In effect, the I.L.P., which had played the leading part in bringing the Labour Party into existence, *was* the individual members' section of the party, and to a very great extent was the party itself.

Of course, the I.L.P. was not the only Socialist body. There was the Fabian Society, which was also affiliated to the Labour Party, and was an important supplier of Socialist lecturers and speakers as well as of the influential *Fabian Tracts*. But the Fabian Society was mainly a London body, though there were small provincial Fabian Societies in a considerable number of towns.[1] The other large Socialist organization was the Social Democratic Federation, the pioneer of Socialist propaganda in Great Britain, founded by Henry Mayers Hyndman as far back as 1881. But the S.D.F. was a strictly Marxist body, which had refused to associate itself with the Labour Party. It paddled its own canoe in rivalry, sometimes

[1] In 1908 there were actually 33 provincial Fabian Societies, as well as 6 University Fabian Societies, and a number of Fabian Groups in various parts of London. The I.L.P. reported 765 branches in February, 1908. Both bodies had recently very much increased their number of branches as a result of the general growth of Socialist activity after 1905.

friendly and sometimes bitter, with the Fabians and the I.L.P., who had consented for the time to wave the Socialist flag less vehemently in order to bring the Trade Unions over to the cause of Labour independence. The S.D.F. was strong in a few places, and had some fine old fighters in its ranks. But it was losing ground ; and its propaganda reached only a very small circle in comparison with that of Keir Hardie's I.L.P.

The remaining movement that, in 1908, played an important part in the work for Socialism was centred round Robert Blatchford's *Clarion.* The greatest days of *The Clarion* had been in the 'nineties, when Blatchford's forceful writing probably made more converts to Socialism than all the other agencies of propaganda together. But in 1908 the *Clarion* movement was still a force, with its popular Cycling Clubs, its Scouts, and its '*Clarion* Vans' touring the country on missions of Socialist speaking. The *Clarion* vans often broke new ground, penetrating into areas in which there was no Labour organization, and leaving a trail of converts behind. Besides, *The Clarion* itself was still a mighty name, though already many Socialists were being estranged by Blatchford's incessant proclamation of the inevitability of war between Germany and Great Britain.

The I.L.P., when I joined it in 1908, had about 25,000 members, and the Fabian Society about 2,500. The Social Democratic Federation or Social Democratic Party, as it had just decided to call itself, had about 14,000. The Labour Party itself mustered an affiliated membership of 1,153,000, of which 1,121,000 were accounted for by the 172 affiliated Trade Unions. At this time an important section of the Trade Union movement was still outside the ranks of the Labour Party. The Miners, who had been the pioneers in sending their own men to represent them in Parliament long before the Labour Party came into being, still put forward their candidates under the auspices of the Liberal Party ; and their M.P.s sat as 'Lib.-Labs.' together with a few other Trade Union members, mostly of the older generation. This phase was, however, very near its end ; for in 1909 the Miners' Federation decided to join the Labour Party, and with the Miners' change of allegiance, 'Lib.-Lab.'-ism ceased once and for all to be of any account.

Even after the accession of the Miners, the Labour Party was still a long way off the status of a fully organized national party, with any apparent prospect of capturing the government of the country. At the General Election of 1906 the Labour Representation Committee, as it was then still called, put 56 candidates into the field. In January, 1910, despite the growth of its membership and organization, it still had only 85 candidates, including miners ; and in December, 1910, compelled to fight a second General Election within a year, it mustered only 62. In fact, the cause of the fewness of candidates was financial ; for in 1909 the Labour Party's finances had been crippled by the decision of the House of Lords that Trade Unions had no legal right to spend money on political objects—the famous ' Osborne Judgment '. But there were other reasons. The party was still not strong enough in most places to run a candidate for Parliament with any prospect of success : it had practically no organization in the rural areas, and in many towns it—or the I.L.P. on its behalf—could do no more than fight a few contests for representation on the Board of Guardians or the Municipal Council. Besides, in the circumstances of 1910 the Labour Party had to walk warily. It was the ally of the Liberal Government in the struggle with the House of Lords over the Lloyd George Budget of 1909 ; and it had to look to the Liberals to restore to it by legislation the political rights which the Osborne Judgment had taken away.

Actually, of the 30 independent Labour M.P.s elected in 1906, only six had won their seats in opposition to Liberals. Fifteen had been opposed only by a Conservative ; and nine others had run, more or less in partnership with a single Liberal, in constituencies returning two Members. On the other hand, of 26 defeated candidates, including five put forward by the separate Scottish Workers' Representation Committee, no less than 19 had run in opposition to Liberals. The great electoral victory of the Labour Party in 1906 was won mainly in constituencies in which the Labour candidate got most of the Liberal votes.

In the two General Elections of 1910 this situation was even accentuated. In January, 1910, out of 40 Labour M.P.s elected, not one had been opposed by an official Liberal

candidate, and only one by an unofficial Liberal. Thirty seats were won in straight fights with Conservatives in constituencies returning a single Member, and in the other ten cases—constituencies returning two Members—a Labour man was sent to the House of Commons with a Liberal colleague. In December of the same year, out of 42 Labour M.P.s only one defeated a Liberal opponent—in a straight fight. There were three returned unopposed—all miners. Twenty-seven had straight fights with Conservatives, and 11 were partnered by Liberals in double constituencies. Labour had become an independent party; but the Labour Members of Parliament still owed their seats in the House of Commons to a combined Liberal and Labour vote.

This state of affairs was due to a number of causes. For one thing, the Miners, even after they had joined the Labour Party, did not completely sever their old connections with the Liberals. M.P.s who had been elected as 'Lib.-Labs.' continued in 1910 to make use of the Liberal machine in their campaigns; and the Liberals did not attempt to challenge the seats held by the leaders of the local Miners' Unions. Secondly, the Labour Party, financially crippled by the Osborne Judgment, could in 1910 do little more than defend the seats which it already held. It had no resources for a mass attack, even had the political situation been different from what it was. Thirdly, the need to settle accounts with the House of Lords and to keep the Liberals in office until this had been done, and also until the effects of the Osborne Judgment had been undone, forced an electoral coalition on both Liberals and Labour. If at a General Election the two parties had fought each other over any considerable field the Conservatives might easily have won a majority; the Osborne Judgment would have remained in force; and the House of Lords would have established its right to reject the Budget.

The coalition of electoral forces was inevitable; but it was not good for the young party which was just trying to find its feet. It provoked strong criticism from left-wing Socialists who denounced the Labour Party as having given up its independence, and consented to become a mere tail wagged by the Liberal dog. It caused an actual split in the I.L.P.,

of which a section broke away and joined the Social Democratic Federation in forming a new British Socialist Party. It helped to foster a strong anti-parliamentary feeling, and to drive many of the younger men in the movement towards Syndicalism and Industrial Unionism, with their gospel of 'Direct Action' by the workers in the industrial field as an alternative to the shams and evasions of the parliamentary game. The wave of strikes which swept over Great Britain between 1910 and 1914 was not primarily caused by this reaction against parliamentary methods. It was much more a direct outcome of the fall in real wages brought about by rising prices, and of the accumulation of Trade Union grievances during the period over which the industrial movement had been paralysed by the Taff Vale Judgment. But the strike movement was intensified and took on a new meaning under the influence of the political disappointment; and the glamour which the Labour Party had gained from its victories of 1906 speedily vanished.

After 1910 the political situation became more difficult than ever. The Liberal Government, no longer in possession of a majority of its own, depended for office on the Labour and Irish votes; and the Labour Party, pledged to support Home Rule for Ireland and still awaiting the legislative removal of the Osborne Judgment, felt bound to keep the Liberals in power. But this now meant that the Labour Party dared not risk pressing their own policy for fear the Conservatives might vote with them and thus bring about the Government's fall. It was impossible under these conditions to make a good showing before the electorate, or to avoid some loss of confidence among the party's own supporters. Moreover, the situation greatly strengthened the hands of those Labour M.P.s who had remained in spirit attached to the Liberal Party, though they had changed their formal allegiance at the behest of the Trade Unions to which they belonged.

The Parliament elected in 1910 was destined owing to the war to remain in existence for eight years. By the time of the next General Election, in December, 1918, the entire political situation had been transformed. Labour M.P.s had sat as Cabinet Ministers in two Coalition Governments, under

Asquith and Lloyd George ; and only after the signing of the Armistice in November had a special Labour Party Conference decided to withdraw from the Coalition and to fight the election as an opposition party. The great Liberal Party had been rent in twain by the revolt of Lloyd George against Asquith's leadership ; and in the election of 1918 there were two ' Labour ' Parties. A small group of Labour supporters, opposed to Labour's withdrawal from the Government, fought on the Government side as ' Coalition Labour ' or ' Coalition National Democratic ' candidates. Only the Conservatives remained solid, controlling the policies of the Lloyd George Coalition Government, which depended principally on their votes.

In readiness for the post-war struggle Arthur Henderson, the secretary and the real leader of the Labour Party during this critical period, had during 1917 and 1918 completely overhauled the organization of the party. The Labour Party, in the form in which it exists to-day, dates essentially from the new Party Constitution of 1918. This it was that brought into existence throughout the country Divisional and Local Labour Parties based on individual as well as affiliated membership. Under this new constitution, the Women's Sections were created, the nucleus being provided by the taking over of the previously independent Women's Labour League. In 1918 Arthur Henderson for the first time equipped the Labour Party with a nation-wide machine of its own, able to undertake propagandist as well as mainly electoral activities and, by enrolling men and women directly as individual members, diverting to the party a good deal of the loyalty and enthusiasm which had till then been given primarily to the I.L.P.

The foundations of this change are complex. In 1914 the main body of the Labour Party and the Trade Unions had given their support to the war, whereas the I.L.P. had taken up an anti-war attitude, partly on Socialist and partly on pacifist grounds. This cleavage made it impossible for the I.L.P. to maintain its position as the individual members' section and propagandist wing of the Labour Party ; for Labour men and women who supported the war could no

longer look to the I.L.P. for leadership. Consequently it became necessary for the Labour Party, in order to appeal to the electorate, to create its own machine for propaganda as well as for the conduct of elections. Thus, the new Labour Party Constitution of 1918 was in part the outcome of the changed relationship of the I.L.P. to the party, on account of the divergent war attitudes of the two bodies.

But the matter was not so simple as this. By 1918 the differences about the war had narrowed, as the centre of attention shifted from the war as such to the question of the peace objectives for which it was being waged. The Labour Party and the I.L.P. were at one in demanding a peace based on social justice and without vindictive reparations or indemnities. If the Labour Party in 1918 could have been content to slip back to the political position which it had held before the war, fighting only a small minority of the total number of seats and making no bid to become the Government of the country, it might have been possible, despite the differences over the war, for the I.L.P. to resume in due course its old position in the party. But such a return was utterly out of the question. The collapse of Liberalism had thrust the Labour Party forward as the only possible alternative foundation for a Government, and therefore as pre-eminently *the* Opposition in the eyes of the country. The Labour Party had, unless it meant to remain inside Lloyd George's coalition, to challenge the Government as a nation-wide party in every possible constituency ; and it could not possibly do this without a new organization appropriate to the magnitude of the task.

With the new Constitution of the Labour Party there came its first full-length declaration of policy—*Labour and the New Social Order*—drafted largely by the Fabian leader, Sidney Webb. The significance of this was not only that it announced the Labour Party's claim to become the Government of Great Britain, but also, and even more, that it thoroughly and explicitly committed the party as a whole to Socialism as its objective. The Labour Party of the years before 1914 had no doubt from time to time passed Socialist resolutions. But it had never proclaimed itself as a Socialist Party, and it had in

its ranks as M.P.s men who openly expressed their hostility to Socialism. The Socialism proclaimed in *Labour and the New Social Order* was of a moderate, evolutionary kind, and no suggestion was made that a Labour Government on coming to power would promptly introduce more than a very small instalment of Socialism. Nevertheless, in the new programme Socialism, as the ultimate objective, was definitely adopted as the programme of the party.

Under the changed conditions, the I.L.P. found itself in a completely different relation to the party which it had been mainly responsible for creating. For now the Labour Party, which was rapidly setting up its own local organizations and enrolling its own individual members up and down the country, was appealing to the people not merely as an electoral machine, but also as a Socialist body carrying on its own Socialist propaganda. To an increasing extent, the local I.L.P. branches found themselves the rivals of the Local Labour Parties, and were pushed out of the positions of direction which they had held. This happened, indeed, very unevenly in different parts of the country ; and in some areas, notably Scotland, the I.L.P. was able largely to keep its hold and to check the growth of new forms of Labour organization. In general, however, the I.L.P., while retaining its affiliation to the Labour Party, became much less important as an electoral or propagandist agency, and tended to turn more into a Socialist debating society in which convinced Socialists of varying opinions argued out their differences. Only in the West of Scotland did it retain its position at the head of the main body of working-class opinion.

It is an essentially remarkable fact that during the war years, despite the sharp cleavage of view between the majority of the Labour Party and the I.L.P., there was no positive split. The anti-war I.L.P. remained throughout an affiliated section of the Labour Party ; and Arthur Henderson and his colleagues on the majority side had the sense not to attempt to drive it out. This was undoubtedly due in part to the fact that the I.L.P. Members of Parliament included several of the Labour Party's outstanding leaders. James Keir Hardie, James Ramsay MacDonald, and Philip Snowden were all

I.L.P. Members of Parliament ; and even after Hardie's death in 1915 had removed the original founder of both bodies there remained MacDonald, who had been leader of the Labour Party up to the outbreak of war, and Snowden, the party's leading financial expert and one of its principal platform figures.

The situation was further complicated by the fact that in most matters of policy, apart from the war issue, MacDonald was much more in sympathy with the moderate majority of the Labour Party than with his colleagues in the leadership of the I.L.P. As leader of the party during the period before the war, he had been closely associated with the policy of keeping on good electoral terms with the Liberals ; and he had been a strong opponent of the Syndicalist and left-wing political doctrines which had obtained some foothold in the I.L.P. during these years. On everything except the war issue, MacDonald had already come, long before the outbreak of war, to stand much more with the Labour Party than with the I.L.P. ; and a rift in the party on the war would inevitably have cut right across differences of policy on most other issues.

That was largely why the party managed to hold together through the war years, and to reunite completely under MacDonald's leadership not long after the return of peace. What happened in effect after the war was that MacDonald and Snowden, while they retained their membership and prestige in the I.L.P., took less and less account of it in practice, and transferred their allegiance increasingly to the reorganized Labour Party machine which Arthur Henderson had built up in readiness for the post-war political struggle.

The I.L.P., on its side, had other difficulties to meet besides the emergence of the Labour Party as a body seeking individual members and undertaking widespread Socialist propaganda. For Socialists in all countries the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia had created a new situation by giving an impetus to the forces of revolution. There arose out of the British Socialist Party, and a number of smaller Socialist bodies of the extreme left, a Communist Party of Great Britain, owing allegiance to the new Third International in Moscow, and demanding that all true Socialists should make world revolution, instead of

evolutionary parliamentarism, their immediate objective and policy. The I.L.P. found itself tossed unhappily to and fro between evolutionary and revolutionary doctrines, and struggled hard to devise for itself a resting place between the two extremes. Its more moderate adherents drifted away from it to work for the reorganized Local Labour Parties, while its extremists split off and joined the Communist Party, leaving it strong only on the Clyde and in a few other places. Vigorous attempts to restore its fortunes were made by Clifford Allen in the middle 'twenties, when it came forward with a policy of ' Socialism in Our Time ', to be attained by a more vigorous use of parliamentary methods. For a few years it rose in membership and influence ; but the second MacDonald Government, which took office in 1929, was soon at loggerheads with the I.L.P. The few I.L.P. Members in Parliament passed into more and more definite opposition to the Government ; and the dispute ended in the secession of the I.L.P., under James Maxton's leadership, from the party which it had brought into existence a generation earlier. A dissentient minority, led by Frank Wise, refused to leave the Labour Party and joined with other Socialists inside the party to create the Socialist League. But within a few years the Socialist League, having come under the leadership of Sir Stafford Cripps, quarrelled in its turn with the Labour Party and was dissolved. Meanwhile, what was left of the I.L.P. went on its way, as a small, independent party, somewhere between the Communists and the Labour Party, and devoid of real strength except on the Clyde, where the personal leadership of Maxton and one or two of his colleagues enabled it to retain a few seats in Parliament and some strength on the City Council of Glasgow.

Thus, to-day, the Labour Party is a very different body from the party of a generation ago. It used to be said in those days, with a great deal of truth, that the Fabians thought out the policies, the I.L.P. selected from them what was most likely to have a popular appeal, and the Trade Unions accepted, with more or less hesitation and watering-down, what the I.L.P. gave them, and paid the bill. This was never wholly true ; for negatively the power of the Trade Unions

was always very great. Their preponderance of voting strength, both in the Labour Party Conference and in the Parliamentary Party, enabled them to veto any proposals which they disliked ; and their weight was thrown consistently both before and during the war on the side of the most moderate policies. They were the chief supporters of close collaboration with the Liberal Government before the war, and the chief advocates of coalition with the capitalist parties during the war.

After 1918 the situation was no longer the same. The Trade Unions were disposed to take a much more positive part in the discussion of policies, especially over matters of reconstruction and resettlement ; and the I.L.P. was for the time being disqualified by its war record and its internal dissensions from acting as the political mentor of the party. Under Henderson's influence the Labour Party equipped itself with its own complete organization both for the devising of policies and for spreading about the results of its enquiries. Henderson made full use of the services of the Labour Research Department (originally a branch of the Fabian Society) ; and I, being the Honorary Secretary of this body, was called in to help in creating for the party an equipment of skilled Advisory Committees on all the main branches of policy, with the best personnel that could be got from the rapidly growing ranks of the party intelligentsia.

At the General Election of 1918, fought by Lloyd George as essentially a ' Victory Election ', the Labour Party secured 57 seats as against 42 won in December, 1910. But this representation was very meagre in comparison with the party's real strength in the country ; and its position in Parliament was weakened by the defeat not only of the leading pacifists in its ranks, headed by MacDonald and Snowden, but also of Arthur Henderson, the real engineer of its new organization and policy. It was therefore not in a position to act with full effect in Parliament until the next General Election, that of 1922, had given it 142 seats—a representation more in accordance with its public backing. Up to 1922 it had worked under stop-gap leadership ; but in the new Parliament the question arose of choosing a leader who might before long be called

upon to form a Government as the first Labour Prime Minister of Great Britain.

There were, in effect, three possible leaders—MacDonald, who had led the party from 1911 to 1914, but had resigned on the outbreak of war ; Henderson, who had been its first war-time leader, and its chief representative in the successive coalition Governments up to his breach with Lloyd George after his visit to Russia in 1917 ; and J. R. Clynes, the President of the General Workers' Union, Food Controller in the Lloyd George Government up to the end of the war, and an old I.L.P.-er who had parted company with his fellow-members when he supported the war in 1914.

Of these three, Arthur Henderson was unwilling to serve, saying that he proposed to devote himself as secretary of the party to the work of organization. The I.L.P. and the Scottish M.P.s threw their weight solidly on the side of MacDonald, who was finally selected as leader by a small majority. The paradox of the situation was that MacDonald, though he stood in reality on the extreme right of the party in all matters of domestic policy, was chosen as leader because of the votes of the left wing, mainly on the strength of his international record. In the light of what happened afterwards, it is beyond doubt that either Clynes or Henderson would have been a greatly preferable choice. But in 1922 even those who had been most critical of MacDonald's leadership of the party before 1914 had largely forgotten their mistrust of his domestic policy. They were eager to make amends to him for the vilification which he had endured because of the unpopular line he had taken during the war.

Not much more than a year passed before MacDonald became Prime Minister. But the story of the two MacDonald Governments of 1924 and 1929 will be told later in a sequel to this book. My purpose here is only to explain how it came about that MacDonald fell heir to the new party machine which Arthur Henderson had built up, and to show how essentially this machine differed from that of the Labour Party of pre-war days. The building of the new machine was a remarkable achievement of organization. Electorally, it gave the Labour Party a magnificent equipment, of which the

advantages were speedily realized in the election victories of 1922 and 1923. But there were certain attendant disadvantages.

The creation of the new Labour Party, as we have seen, finally drove the I.L.P. out of its old key-position within the party. As soon as the Labour Party itself began enrolling a large individual membership throughout the country, the I.L.P. lost an important part of its functions. It was no longer the only rallying-point for local Labour supporters who were keen enough and politically-minded enough to want to do regular work for the party and to engage in the regular discussion of Labour and Socialist problems. The Local Labour Party now provided an alternative field of activity, and accordingly it became harder for the I.L.P. to attract members and to hold their loyalty. The electoral work previously done largely by the I.L.P. was taken over for the most part by the Local Labour Parties ; and this robbed the I.L.P. of an important part of its appeal.

This would not have mattered if the Local Labour Parties had been able to supersede the I.L.P. altogether, and to do everything the I.L.P. had done. But in fact this did not happen. The Local Labour Parties remained primarily electoral bodies, preoccupied with the winning of seats at national and local elections. They took over only half-heartedly, and in many places hardly at all, the other part of the I.L.P.'s work—that of incessant propaganda directed to the making of Socialists—that is, of men and women prepared not merely to support Labour candidates, but to give a large part of their lives to the Socialist cause. The Local Labour Party organization seldom succeeded in inspiring among a substantial circle of members the sort of tireless enthusiasm which had been the driving force behind the political Labour movement in its pioneering days.

The I.L.P., as it emerged from its war difficulties, tried to rebuild itself so as to carry on this essential work. But there was a formidable obstacle in the way. When it devised Socialist policies and attempted to rouse its members' enthusiasm in support of them it found itself involved in a quarrel with the Labour Party, and was accused of pushing

its sectional policies against those which were being worked out by the party itself. Up to 1918, there had been in effect only one policy-building organization—the I.L.P. The Labour Party had not always accepted the I.L.P.'s proposals ; but it had selected from them, and had seldom advanced positive alternative policies of its own. But now there were apt to be two policies on each question—one coming from the Labour Party and one from the I.L.P. The I.L.P., regarding itself as the Socialist vanguard, always felt called upon to propose something more than the Labour Party had endorsed ; and this led the Trade Union majority in the Labour Party to regard the I.L.P. more and more as a nuisance. In effect, the I.L.P., instead of regaining its position as the Socialist-making ally of the party machine, became increasingly the Labour Party's critic and rival.

Unfortunately, what this meant in practice was that the work of turning Labour supporters into keen and active Socialists was left to a great extent undone. The I.L.P. wasted much of its effort in bickering with the Labour Party ; and potentially keen Socialists who were not attracted to it were left without any rallying point. It was in the hope of remedying this defect that Ernest Bevin and a group of which I was a member set to work in 1930 to found the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda, which was designed to work inside the Labour Party purely as an organ of Socialist advocacy and investigation. But any chance this body had of succeeding in its purpose disappeared after its fusion with the section of the I.L.P. which decided to remain inside the Labour Party when the I.L.P. itself seceded in 1932. For the Socialist League, as it then became, allowed itself to fall into just the same pit as the I.L.P. had dug for itself a few years before. It began putting forward rival policies to those of the Labour Party, and manœuvred itself into an impossible position, until it chose suicide by dissolution rather than face being turned bodily out of the party.

These recurrent failures to create an effective organization for Socialist-making propaganda side by side with the highly effective electoral machine of the Labour Party itself are very serious. For electoral machines alone can neither win elec-

tions nor provide adequate backing for those who are elected under their auspices. There is and can be no valid substitute for the inspired and understanding keenness of a nucleus of real Socialists as the driving force behind the machine.

Why did first the I.L.P. and then the Socialist League fail to carry out this indispensable function as allies of the Labour Party? One reason, no doubt, was that the acute dissatisfaction of Socialists with MacDonald's leadership made it very difficult for any definitely Socialist organization inside the party not to adopt the rôle of perpetual critic. But this does not explain the failure of the Socialist League, after MacDonald had removed himself. Nor is it enough to say, as many Socialists would, that the party was not fully purged of MacDonaldism by the disappearance of its best-known exponent. The causes of failure lie, in part at least, deeper than this.

In the first place, I feel certain that neither the I.L.P. nor the Socialist League ever realized the limiting conditions of what they were setting out to do. If they were to act as Socialist-making agencies within the party, it was indispensable to avoid the appearance of setting up in any sense as rivals to the party, either in the field of organization or in that of programme-making. The first of these conditions meant that they had to avoid all appearance of building up a rival organization to the Local Labour Party. They could do this only if they refrained deliberately from seeking a large membership, and recruited only members who came to them and were prepared to take their membership seriously, and to work hard not so much for the I.L.P. or the League as for the Local Labour Party and any other part of the Labour movement with which they were connected. The only kind of Socialist-making body that can do its job properly under present conditions is one in which membership is regarded as a privilege and a serious obligation, and recruiting is based on picking the right individuals and not on enrolling anyone who is prepared to pay a few pence a week.

The second condition is no less essential. It is that the Socialist-making body shall refrain, *as a body*, from pushing programmes which conflict with the official programme of the

party. It will, no doubt, happen that a society consisting of keen and convinced Socialists will want to go faster than the Labour Party as a whole will be prepared to go, and will on occasion differ strongly from the party on questions of immediate policy and strategy. Its members will then be fully entitled *as individuals* to take up and press any view which they hold, provided they do this inside their Local Labour Party or Trade Union branch or Co-operative Political Committee, and provided they do *not* do it as representing the Socialist-making body. The Socialist-making body, as such, should have no policy, except a belief in Socialism. Even if all its members hold the same opinion on a particular point, they should refrain from pressing that opinion in the name of the Society.

Now this, I know, involves a difficult act of self-denial. Perhaps, for many people, the act is an impossible one. But I am firmly convinced that it is the only condition on which we can hope to re-create in Great Britain what our Labour movement to-day most signally lacks—an effective organization for making intelligent Socialists and getting them to place their skill and enthusiasm fully at the disposal of the Labour and Trade Union movements.

What I have written does not mean that I think the failure first of the I.L.P. and then of the Socialist League to meet this need was entirely the fault of the leaders of these bodies. If they failed to appreciate the limitations which had to be accepted in order to make success possible, I think those who were at the head of the Labour Party machine failed to realize that there was any need for a body which would devote itself to the task of making and educating Socialists. They seem to have acted in the belief that the Labour Party machine itself could be made to serve this purpose, for which it was in truth disqualified both by its preoccupation with electoral affairs and, still more, by the fact that it was in essence a mass-movement seeking to secure a mass-following rather than to train up a selective body of enthusiasts. Arthur Henderson, I think, did realize this need : at all events, he gave me every encouragement when I was trying with others to meet it by the creation of the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda.

But most of his colleagues did not seem to see the point. They felt that any body which was not part of the party machinery was a potential disruptive influence. And alas! what happened later to the Socialist League looked very like a fulfilment of their fears.

To-day, the only body which is attempting at all to act in accordance with the conditions which I have laid down is the Fabian Society. This *doyen* among Socialist organizations has recently been completely re-shaped and reinforced with new and young blood; and it is doing its best to make intelligent Socialists without falling foul of the Labour Party in the process. It has adopted the self-denying rules of which I have spoken. Though it remains an affiliated section of the Labour Party, with the right to propose resolutions to the Party Conference, it has decided that it will put forward no resolutions, and has written this ordinance into its own constitution. Moreover, it has decided to have, as a Society, no collective opinions except a belief in democratic Socialism. From time to time it appoints committees, and they make reports; but the opinions of its committees do not commit the Society. It sets individual investigators to work, and publishes their reports if they are competent and interesting, without inquiring whether it agrees with them or not. It aims at being a Society in which intelligent Socialists can live and work together, even if they differ profoundly on matters of policy and strategy.

But—a big 'but' this—the Fabian Society has to-day little strength outside London (though its Scottish and a few of its provincial branches are already showing signs of renewed life); and it appeals at present almost wholly to the middle-class Socialist, and has only a few Trade Unionists or working-class Co-operators in its ranks. I do not know whether this defect can be remedied, so as to make the Fabian Society into the Socialist-making body which the Labour movement sorely needs. If not, the need will have to be met in another way, by the creation of a new body more on the lines of the abortive Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda of 1931. In one way or another, I am sure the need must be met, if we are to get behind the movement for democratic Socialism the drive

and enthusiasm which have made the Communists formidable despite their fewness and their impossible tergiversations of recent years.

In fact, my main purpose in writing this history of the earlier phases of the political Labour movement has been to bring out clearly the need for a positive effort to re-create the legion of inspired and untiring propagandists for Socialism whose work made the Labour Party possible. I have written it in the belief that the indispensable part played by these apostles stands out plainly in the record of the movement's growth, and that its history in recent years shows evident signs of the damage done by allowing this essential part of its armoury to rust in disuse.

APPENDIX I

RADICAL AND LABOUR REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT FROM 1800 TO 1914

I

CERTAIN RADICAL CONTESTS IN OPEN BOROUGHS BEFORE THE REFORM ACT OF 1832

A. WESTMINSTER. (2 seats.)

1790. C. J. Fox, Whig, 3,516; Lord Hood, Tory, 3,217; *John Horne Tooke, Radical*, 1,679.

1796. C. J. Fox, Whig, 5,160; Sir A. Gardner, Tory, 4,814; *John Horne Tooke, Radical*, 2,819.

1806. Sir Samuel Hood, Tory, 5,478; R. B. Sheridan, Whig, 4,758; *James Paull, Radical*, 4,481.

1807. SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, *Radical*, 5,134; LORD COCHRANE, *Radical*, 3,708; R. B. Sheridan, Whig, 2,615; John Elliot, Tory, 2,137; *James Paull, Radical*, 269.

1818. Sir S. Romilly, Whig, 5,339; SIR F. BURDETT, *Radical*, 5,238; Sir M. Maxwell, Tory, 4,808; *Henry Hunt, Radical*, 84; Hon. D. Kinnard, Whig, 65; *Major John Cartwright, Radical*, 23.

1819. (Bye) Hon. G. Lamb, Tory, 4,465; J. C. Hobhouse, Whig, 3,861; *Major John Cartwright, Radical*, 38.

1820. SIR F. BURDETT, *Radical*, 5,327; J. C. Hobhouse, Whig, 4,882; Hon. G. Lamb, Tory, 4,436.

B. COVENTRY. (2 seats.)

1820. Edward Ellice, Whig, 1,474; Peter Moore, Whig, 1,422; *William Cobbett, Radical*, 517.

C. PRESTON. (2 seats.)

1820. Samuel Horrocks, Tory, 1,902; Edmund Hornby, Whig, 1,647; Williams, 1,525; *Henry Hunt, Radical*, 1,127.

1826. Hon. E. G. Stanley, Whig, 3,044; John Wood, Whig, 1,982; Captain Barrie, R.N., Tory, 1,657; *William Cobbett, Radical*, 995.

1830. Hon. E. G. Stanley, Whig, 2,996; John Wood, Whig, 2,389; *Henry Hunt, Radical*, 1,308.

1830. (Bye) HENRY HUNT, *Radical*, 3,770; Hon. E. G. Stanley, Whig, 3,392.

II

FROM THE FIRST REFORM ACT, 1832, TO THE SECOND REFORM ACT, 1867

1832. The First Reformed Parliament.

WILLIAM COBBETT and JOHN FIELDEN, the Radical cotton spinner who supported factory reform, were both elected for Oldham against Whigs and Tories.

GEORGE FAITHFUL, a follower of Cobbett, and another Radical, J. N. WIGNEY, were elected for Brighton against Whigs and Tories.

THOMAS ATTWOOD, of the Birmingham Political Union, active later in the Chartist movement, was elected unopposed for Birmingham, together with another Radical, JOSHUA SCHOLEFIELD.

GEORGE KINLOCH, the Scottish Radical, was elected against a Whig at Dundee.

FEARGUS O'CONNOR, later to lead the Chartists, was elected for Cork County as a follower of Daniel O'Connell.

Sir Francis Burdett, who had ceased to count as a Radical, was re-elected for Westminster, against *Colonel De Lacy Evans*, who stood as a Radical. The other seat was won by John Cam Hobhouse, who had sponsored the Factory Bills of 1825 and 1831.

Henry Hunt lost his seat at Preston, coming in third out of five candidates. He was opposed by the Whigs.

Other notable Radical candidates were *Thomas Wakley* (Finsbury), the founder of *The Lancet*, *Samuel Bailey*, the economist, at Sheffield, *John Douglas* at Glasgow, *Charles Attwood*, brother of Thomas, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, *John Moore* and *Daniel Wakefield* at Lambeth, and *James Taylor* at Rochdale.

[Kinloch died in 1833. In that year *John Morgan Cobbett*, son of William, fought Coventry, but was badly beaten;

but COLONEL DE LACY EVANS was elected at Westminster, beating Hobhouse. In 1834 THOMAS SLINGSBY DUNCOMBE, later President of the National Association of United Trades, won Finsbury in a four-cornered fight against a Whig, a Tory, and a fellow Radical, *Thomas Wakley*.]

1835.

WILLIAM COBBETT and JOHN FIELDEN were unopposed at Oldham.

THOMAS ATTWOOD and JOSHUA SCHOLEFIELD were re-elected for Birmingham, against a Tory.

T. S. DUNCOMBE and THOMAS WAKLEY were both elected for Finsbury.

COLONEL DE LACY EVANS was re-elected with Burdett for Westminster.

FEARGUS O'CONNOR was re-elected for Cork, but disqualified.
George Faithful was beaten at Brighton.

Other Radical candidates included *J. M. Cobbett* at Chichester, *John Moore* at Reigate, *Sir Charles Wolseley*, an old follower of Major Cartwright, at Stafford, *Samuel Bailey* at Sheffield, and *William Carpenter*, the Radical journalist, at Marlow.

[*Henry Hunt* and *William Cobbett* both died in 1835. *J. M. Cobbett* and *Feargus O'Connor* stood against each other for Cobbett's Oldham seat, and a Tory got in. In 1836 *John Bell* fought Sheffield, but did not get a single vote.]

1837.

JOHN FIELDEN and GENERAL W. A. JOHNSON were elected at Oldham.

THOMAS ATTWOOD and JOSHUA SCHOLEFIELD were re-elected at Birmingham.

T. S. DUNCOMBE and THOMAS WAKLEY were re-elected at Finsbury.

COLONEL DE LACY EVANS was re-elected at Westminster.

The first Chartist candidates appeared. *Joseph Rayner Stephens*, the Methodist orator, fought Ashton-under-Lyne, *Augustine Harding Beaumont* Newcastle-on-Tyne, and *John Bell* Coventry. They polled few votes. *J. M. Cobbett* stood again for Chichester.

[In 1838 *Richard Oastler*, the factory reformer, stood twice for Huddersfield, and was beaten only by 340 votes to 290

in May, and by 323 to 301 in August. In 1840 *Thomas Attwood* retired from Birmingham, and was succeeded by G. F. Muntz.]

1841.

JOHN FIELDEN and GENERAL W. A. JOHNSON were re-elected at Oldham.

T. S. DUNCOMBE and THOMAS WAKLEY were re-elected unopposed at Finsbury.

Colonel Evans was beaten at Westminster.

Chartist candidates included *Henry Vincent* (Banbury), *Thomas Lowery* (Aberdeen), *Thomas Murray McDouall* (Northampton), *James Thomason* (Paisley), *Dr. James Bedford* (Reigate). These all went to the poll. Chartist ' hustings ' candidates included *James Bronterre O'Brien* (Newcastle-on-Tyne), *George Julian Harney* and *Lawrence Pitkeithly* (Yorkshire, West Riding), *J. B. Hanson*, a handloom weaver (Carlisle), *James Leach* and *James Williams* (Leeds), *John Mason* (Tynemouth), and *W. V. Sankey* (Marylebone). David Urquhart, with whom Marx collaborated in international matters, fought Sheffield as a Tory.

[In 1842 *Henry Vincent* fought Ipswich, and *Joseph Sturge*, of the Complete Suffrage Union, was narrowly beaten at Nottingham. In 1844, *Henry Vincent* stood at Kilmarnock, and *Joseph Sturge* himself fought Birmingham in the same year, as a third party candidate. In 1845 Sturge's collaborator, *Edward Miall*, editor of *The Nonconformist*, fought Southwark.]

1847.

T. S. DUNCOMBE and THOMAS WAKLEY were re-elected unopposed at Finsbury.

FEARGUS O'CONNOR was elected at Nottingham, the only Chartist M.P. He and a Tory beat Hobhouse and another Whig.

David Urquhart was elected for Stafford, as a Tory.

John Fielden and *J. M. Cobbett*, who stood with him, were beaten at Oldham, one of the victors being William Johnson Fox, the Corn Law reformer.

Chartist candidates included *George Julian Harney* (Tiverton), *W. P. Roberts*, the ' Miners' Attorney ' (Blackburn), *Thomas Clark* (Sheffield), *John West* (Stockport), *Ernest Jones* (Halifax), *Henry Vincent* (Ipswich), *Samuel Carter* (Tavistock), and *Thomas*

McGrath (Derby). *Joseph Sturge* stood for Leeds, and *Dr. J. Epps*, of the Fraternal Democrats, for Northampton. *Robert Owen* received one vote at Marylebone.

[In 1848 *Henry Vincent* stood for York, and *P. M. McDouall* for Carlisle.]

1852.

T. S. DUNCOMBE was re-elected at Finsbury.

LAWRENCE HEYWORTH, formerly of the Complete Suffrage Union, was elected at Derby.

Thomas Wakley retired.

Feargus O'Connor had been declared insane.

Chartist candidates included *Charles Sturgeon* (Nottingham), who failed to hold O'Connor's seat, *Ernest Jones* (Halifax), *J. J. Lockhart* (Northampton), *Samuel Carter* (Tavistock), and *Henry Vincent* (York). *James Watson*, the Chartist journalist, and *George Applegate*, a London coal-whipper, appeared as 'hustings' candidatures at Tynemouth, but did not go to the poll. Carter was elected at Tavistock, but disqualified.

William Newton, of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, polled 1,095 in a five-cornered contest at Tower Hamlets, against two Whigs (7,728 and 7,718) and two Liberal-Radicals (4,568 and 2,792). This was the first definitely Trade Union candidature.

[In 1856 *Richard Hart* appeared as Chartist 'hustings' candidate at Newcastle-on-Tyne, but did not go to the poll.]

1857.

T. S. DUNCOMBE was re-elected at Finsbury.

Lawrence Heyworth did not stand again for Derby.

Chartist candidates were *Ernest Jones* at Nottingham, *C. F. F. Wordsworth* at Paisley, and *Samuel Carter* at Tavistock. *George Jacob Holyoake* was put forward at Tower Hamlets, but withdrew.

[Later in the year, *Edward Miall* fought Tavistock against a Whig, and was beaten by 164 to 120.]

1859.

T. S. DUNCOMBE was re-elected for Finsbury.

Ernest Jones again stood for Nottingham. *Abel Heywood* stood for Manchester.

[In 1860 F. R. Lees stood as a Temperance Chartist for Ripon. *T. S. Duncombe* died in 1861.]

1865.

THOMAS HUGHES, the Christian Socialist, was elected for Lambeth.

JOHN STUART MILL was elected for Westminster.

JOSEPH COWEN, the elder, was elected for Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Abel Heywood stood again for Manchester, and *Samuel Carter* for Tavistock.

Samuel Plimsoll, the Seamen's friend, stood for Derby.

III

FROM THE SECOND REFORM ACT, 1867, TO THE THIRD REFORM ACT, 1884

1868.

THOMAS HUGHES was elected for Frome.

SAMUEL PLIMSOLL, the Seamen's friend, was elected at Derby.

CHARLES WENTWORTH DILKE was elected at Chelsea.

John Stuart Mill was defeated at Westminster.

Ernest Jones, who had been prominently associated with the National Reform League and had become a convert to joint action by the working and middle classes, stood for Manchester, where he was practising as a barrister. Manchester had gained a third seat as a result of the Reform Act of 1867 ; and there were three Liberals and two Conservatives in the field in addition to Ernest Jones. A Conservative headed the poll with 15,486 votes, followed by Thomas Barley (Liberal) with 14,192. Jacob Bright, a Radical-Liberal, was third, with 13,514. The second Conservative got 12,684, Ernest Jones 10,662, and the remaining Liberal 5,236.

The first Labour candidates made their appearance under the new electoral law. They were mostly due to the efforts of the London Working Men's Association. *George Howell*, of the Bricklayers and the National Reform League, fought Aylesbury (2 seats) against one Liberal (1,772) and one Tory (1,468). Howell polled 942. *William Randall Cremer*, of the Carpenters, fought Warwick (2 seats) in a similar contest,

polling 260 against 873 for the Liberal and 863 for the Tory. *Edward Owen Greening*, the Co-operator, fought Halifax (2 seats) against two Liberals, polling 2,802 against 5,278 and 5,141. *William Newton*, of the Engineers, again fought Tower Hamlets, in partnership with *Edmund Beales*, the Chairman of the National Reform League, against two Liberals and a Conservative. Beales got 7,160 votes, and Newton 2,890, against 9,839 and 7,849 for the Liberals, and 7,446 for the Conservative. *George Odger* was put up at Chelsea, but retired under pressure from the Radical-Liberals. *Robert Hartwell*, the Secretary of the London Working Men's Association, and an old Chartist printer, was first put up as the colleague of Thomas Hughes at Lambeth ; but when Hughes decided to stand for Frome, Hartwell moved to Stoke-on-Trent, whence he had to withdraw for lack of funds. *Alexander Macdonald*, the Miners' leader, had to withdraw for the same reason at Kilmarnock. *George Jacob Holyoake* was put forward at Birmingham, but withdrew for lack of support.

Charles Bradlaugh and *F. R. Lees* stood at Northampton (2 seats) against two Liberals and two Conservatives. The Liberals got 2,619 and 2,154 votes, the Conservatives 1,634 and 1,396, Bradlaugh 1,086, and Lees 492.

[In 1871 *George Howell* was put forward at Norwich, but withdrew in order to avoid splitting the Liberal vote. In 1873 *J. Baxter Langley*, who helped the Railwaymen's Union and was active in the Building Society movement, stood against four Liberals and a Conservative in a by-election at Greenwich, coming in second with 2,379 votes to the winning Tory's 4,525. In 1874 the younger JOSEPH COWEN was elected in a straight fight at Newcastle-on-Tyne, by 7,356 to the Conservative's 6,353.]

1874. The first election fought by the Labour Representation League.

SIR CHARLES DILKE was re-elected for Chelsea.

JOSEPH COWEN was re-elected for Newcastle-on-Tyne.

SAMUEL PLIMSOLL was re-elected for Derby.

THOMAS BURT was elected for Morpeth against a Tory by 3,332 votes to 585.

ALEXANDER MACDONALD won one of the two seats at Stafford against two Liberals (1,238 and 903), and a Conservative (947). Macdonald polled 1,183.

Burt, of the Northumberland Miners, and Macdonald, Secretary of the National Miners' Association, are generally regarded as the first Labour M.P.s.

Other Labour candidates were as follows : *George Howell* (Bricklayers) at Aylesbury (2 seats), polled 1,144, against 1,761 for the Liberal and 1,624 for the Conservative. *George Potter*, the London Builders' leader and editor of *The Beehive*, fought Peterborough against four Liberals and one Conservative. The leading Liberals polled 1,135 and 1,105, the Conservative 666, Potter 562, and the others 323 and 71. *W. R. Cremer* (Carpenters) again fought Warwick, against two Conservatives and one Liberal for the two seats. He polled 183, against 836 and 740 for the Conservatives, and 783 for the Liberal. *Henry Broadhurst* (Stonemasons) stood at High Wycombe (1 seat), in a three-cornered fight. The Liberal got 980 votes, Broadhurst 113, and the Conservative 19. At Middlesbrough (1 seat) *John Kane* (Ironworkers) came in second in a three-cornered fight, getting 1,541 votes to the Liberal's 3,717 and the Conservative's 956. At Preston (2 seats) *Thomas Mottershead* (Silk Weavers) polled 3,606 against 6,362 and 5,211 for the two Conservatives who were his only opponents. At Stoke-on-Trent (2 seats) *A. A. Walton*, an architect and builder who had been closely associated with Trade Unionism and Radical Reform, polled 5,198 against two Liberals (6,700 and 5,369) and one Conservative (6,180). At Merthyr Tydfil (2 seats) *Thomas Halliday* (Amalgamated Miners) got 4,912 votes against 7,606 for Henry Richard, the Quaker Liberal, and 6,908 for the other Liberal. There was no Conservative. At Wigan (2 seats) *William Pickard*, the Lancashire Miners' leader, came in fourth against two Conservatives (2,493 and 2,401) and two Liberals (1,883 and 1,029). Pickard polled 1,134. Finally, at Finsbury (2 seats), *Benjamin Lucraft* (Cabinet Makers) polled 3,205 against 10,099 and 9,713 for the two Liberals, and 7,737 for the one Conservative.

At this election *Charles Bradlaugh* again fought Northampton, against two Liberals (2,310 and 1,796) and two Conservatives (2,690 and 2,175). Bradlaugh's poll was 1,653. *Joseph Chamberlain*, then a strong Radical, stood at Sheffield against the official Liberals, polling 11,053 against 14,193 and 12,858, a fourth Liberal getting 621 votes. There was no Conservative.

[In 1875 *A. A. Walton* again fought Stoke-on-Trent, against a Liberal (6,110) and a Conservative (3,901). Walton polled 4,168. In the same year *William Newton* had a straight fight with a Conservative at Ipswich, polling 1,607 against 2,203. In 1876 JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN was returned unopposed for Birmingham. In 1880 *George Shipton*, the Painters' Secretary, polled 799 at Southwark against a Conservative (7,683) and a Liberal (6,830).]

1880.

SIR CHARLES DILKE was re-elected at Chelsea.

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN was re-elected at Birmingham.

JOSEPH COWEN was re-elected at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

SAMUEL PLIMSOLL was re-elected at Derby, but resigned the same year.

THOMAS BURT was re-elected unopposed at Morpeth.

ALEXANDER MACDONALD was re-elected at Stafford. The one Liberal polled 1,498, Macdonald 1,345, and the two Conservatives 1,230 and 1,149.

HENRY BROADHURST was elected for Stoke-on-Trent. The one official Liberal polled 12,130, Broadhurst 11,379, the Conservative 5,102, and the sitting member, as an Independent, 1,916.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH was elected for Northampton, with Henry Labouchere (4,228). Bradlaugh polled 3,980, and the two Conservatives 3,222 and 2,835. Bradlaugh was unseated on refusing to take the oath.

Benjamin Lucraft stood for Tower Hamlets, polling 5,103, against 12,020 and 10,384 for the two Liberals, and 11,720 for the one Conservative.

Joseph Arch, the leader of the Agricultural Labourers, polled 397 against 819 at Wilton in a straight fight with a Conservative.

E. D. Lewis stood for Middlesbrough, and polled 1,171 votes against 4,816 for the Liberal and 1,626 for the Conservative.

[CHARLES BRADLAUGH was again elected at Northampton in 1881 by 3,437 votes to a Conservative's 3,305. On his expulsion bv the House of Commons, he was re-elected in 1882 by 3,796 to 3,688. The House of Commons continuing to exclude him, he was re-elected again in 1884 by 4,032 to 3,664. *Alexander Macdonald* died in 1881. *George Howell* then fought Stafford, but was beaten in a straight fight with a Tory by 1,482 to 1,185.]

IV

FROM THE REFORM ACT OF 1884 TO THE FORMATION OF THE LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE

1885.

SIR CHARLES DILKE was re-elected at Chelsea.

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN was re-elected at Birmingham.

JOSEPH COWEN was re-elected at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH was re-elected at Northampton.

THOMAS BURT was re-elected unopposed at Morpeth.

HENRY BROADHURST was elected for the Bordesley division of Birmingham by 5,362 against 4,019 for a Tory.

JOSEPH ARCH was elected for North-West Norfolk, by 4,461 to 3,821, in a straight fight with a Tory.

WILLIAM RANDALL CREMER was elected for the Haggerston division of Shoreditch by 2,736 to 1,259, in a straight fight with a Tory.

WILLIAM CRAWFORD, the Durham Miners' leader, was elected for Mid-Durham by 5,799 to 3,245, in a straight fight with a Tory.

JOHN WILSON, also of the Durham Miners, was elected for Houghton-le-Spring by 6,511 to 4,767, in a straight fight with a Tory.

CHARLES FENWICK, of the Northumberland Miners, was elected for Wansbeck by 5,858 to 2,703, in a straight fight with a Tory.

BENJAMIN PICKARD, the Yorkshire Miners' leader, was elected for Normanton by 5,615 to 3,706, in a straight fight with a Tory.

WILLIAM ABRAHAM, of the South Wales Miners, was elected for Rhondda by 3,859 to 2,992, in a straight fight with a Liberal.

GEORGE HOWELL was elected for North-East Bethnal Green by 3,095 to 1,844, in a straight fight with a Tory.

JOSEPH LEICESTER, of the Flint Glass Makers, was elected for West Ham, South, by 3,527 to 2,545, in a straight fight with a Tory.

This election marks the real beginning of the 'Lib.-Lab.' group.

DR. R. MACDONALD was elected as the Crofters' candidate in Ross and Cromarty by 4,942, in a straight fight with a Liberal.

DR. G. B. CLARK was elected as the Crofters' candidate in Caithness by 2,110 to 1,218, in a straight fight with a Liberal.

PROFESSOR J. E. THOROLD ROGERS, the Radical economic historian, was elected at Bermondsey in a straight fight with a Conservative.

Other Trade Union candidates included *James Haslam*, of the Derbyshire Miners, at Chesterfield (Liberal 3,408, Conservative 2,136, Labour 1,907) ; *James Rowlands*, of the Cab Drivers, at East Finsbury (Conservative 2,055, Labour 2,035) ; *N. B. Billany*, at Central Hull (Conservative 4,193, Liberal 4,027, Labour 735) ; *John M. Inglis*, of the Blacksmiths, at Kirkcaldy (Liberal 2,180, Labour 1,504, Conservative 746) ; *T. R. Threlfall*, Secretary of the Labour Electoral Association, at Horncastle (Conservative 4,824, Labour 3,959) ; and *M. T. Johnson*, at Jarrow (Liberal 5,702, Labour 1,731). The Social Democratic Federation ran *John Burns* at West Nottingham (Liberal 6,669, Conservative 3,797, Socialist 598), and also *John E. Williams* at Hampstead (Conservative 2,785, Liberal 1,910, Socialist 27) and *John Fielding* at Kennington (Conservative 3,351, Liberal 2,991, Socialist 32). The two latter were the 'Tory Gold' candidatures. The Scottish Crofters and Land Reformers put a number of candidates in the field, in addition to Dr. G. B. Clark and Dr. MacDonald. These included four in Glasgow : *J. Shaw Maxwell* in Blackfriars (Liberal 3,759, Conservative 3,137, Maxwell 1,156) ; *W. Forsyth* in Bridgeton (Liberal 3,601, Conservative 3,478, Forsyth 978) ; *J. Martin* in Camlachie (Liberal 4,047, Conservative 2,883, Martin 177) ; and *W. M. Greaves* in Tradeston (Liberal 4,354, Conservative 3,240, Greaves 86). At Greenock *J. Morrison Davidson* got only 65 votes, against the Liberal's 3,057 and the Conservative's 2,951. In three divisions of Lanarkshire there were also contests. In Govan *J. Bennett Burleigh*, the war correspondent, polled 3,522 against a Conservative's 3,677 and 4 votes for an Independent ; in North-West Lanarkshire R. B. Cunninghame Graham, the Radical laird, polled 3,442 to 4,545 in a straight fight with a Conservative. In Partick, however, *J. Murdoch* got only 74 votes against 3,726 for the Liberal and 3,385 for the Conservative. In Sutherlandshire *A. Sutherland* (Crofters) polled 1,058 to the Liberal's 1,701.

Other Radical-Labour candidates included *James Samuelson*

in the Kirkdale division of Liverpool, where he polled 1,981, against 3,391 for a Conservative and 765 for an Irish Nationalist. *Samuel Plimsoll* fought Central Sheffield, getting 3,484 votes, against 4,633 for a Conservative and 140 for an Independent. *Dr. R. M. Pankhurst*, later associated with the I.L.P., fought Rotherhithe as a Liberal, and was beaten by 3,327 to 2,800 in a straight fight with a Conservative. *Professor E. S. Beesly*, the Positivist friend of the Trade Unions, was beaten in Westminster by a Tory, by 3,991 to 1,737.

This was the first election in which Socialist candidates made their appearance.

1886.

This election marks the end of the Radicals. Joseph Chamberlain was re-elected at Birmingham as a Liberal-Unionist. Sir Charles Dilke was beaten at Chelsea. Joseph Cowen retired from Newcastle-on-Tyne.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH was re-elected for Northampton.

THOMAS BURT was re-elected unopposed for Morpeth.

HENRY BROADHURST was elected for West Nottingham by 5,458 to 4,609, against a Liberal-Unionist.

W. R. CREMER was re-elected at Haggerston by 2,054 to 1,677, against a Liberal-Unionist.

WILLIAM CRAWFORD was re-elected unopposed for Mid-Durham.

CHARLES FENWICK was re-elected for Wansbeck by 5,235 to 1,710, against a Liberal-Unionist.

BENJAMIN PICKARD was re-elected for Normanton by 4,771 to 3,724, against a Conservative.

WILLIAM ABRAHAM was re-elected unopposed for the Rhondda.

GEORGE HOWELL was re-elected for North-East Bethnal Green by 2,278 to 1,906, against a Liberal-Unionist.

JAMES ROWLANDS was elected for East Finsbury by 1,973 to 1,912, against a Conservative.

ROBERT BONTEEN CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM was elected as a Radical for North-East Lanarkshire by 4,030 to 3,698, against a Conservative.

DR. G. B. CLARK was re-elected for Caithness-shire by 2,034 to 584, against a Liberal-Unionist.

DR. R. MACDONALD was re-elected for Ross and Cromarty by 4,263 to 1,197, against a Liberal-Unionist.

Joseph Arch was beaten by a Conservative in North-West Norfolk, by 4,084 to 4,064.

Joseph Leicester was beaten by a Conservative in West Ham, South, by 2,878 to 2,572.

John Wilson was beaten by a Conservative at Houghton-le-Spring, by 5,870 to 5,059.

Other Trade Union candidates included *George Potter*, at Preston, who stood with one Liberal against two Conservatives for the two seats. The Conservatives polled 7,497 and 7,296, the Liberal 4,982, and Potter 4,771. *T. R. Threlfall* was defeated in the Hallam division of Sheffield by a Conservative, by 3,581 to 2,612. *James Samuelson*, in East Renfrew, was beaten by a Conservative, by 3,806 to 2,438. *Frederic Harrison*, the lawyer friend of the Trade Unions, got 516 votes for London University, against the Liberal-Unionist. *Professor E. S. Beesly* was beaten by a Conservative in East Marylebone, by 3,101 to 1,616. *Professor J. E. Thorold Rogers* lost his Bermondsey seat to a Conservative, by 3,356 to 2,998.

[In 1888 *James Keir Hardie* fought Mid-Lanark as a Labour candidate, polling 617 against the Liberal's 3,847 and the Conservative's 2,917. In 1890 *William Crawford* died, and *John Wilson* retained his seat at Mid-Durham by 5,469 to a Conservative's 3,375. In the same year, *James Havelock Wilson*, the Seamen's leader, fought East Bristol, getting 602 votes against 4,778 for the Liberal and 1,900 for the Conservative. In 1891 *Michael Davitt*, of the Irish Land League, fought Waterford against a Parnellite, and was beaten by 1,725 to 1,229. *Charles Bradlaugh* died in 1891.]

1892. This is the election at which the first Independent Labour M.P.s were returned to the House of Commons. Of the existing M.P.s:

THOMAS BURT was re-elected unopposed for Morpeth.

W. R. CREMER was re-elected for Haggerston against a Conservative, by 2,543 to 1,622.

CHARLES FENWICK was re-elected for Wansbeck against a Conservative, by 5,696 to 2,920.

BENJAMIN PICKARD was re-elected for Normanton against a Conservative, by 6,134 to 3,803.

WILLIAM ABRAHAM was re-elected unopposed for the Rhondda.

GEORGE HOWELL was re-elected for North-East Bethnal Green, with 2,918 against Conservative (2,321), Socialist, *H. R. Taylor* (106), and Independent (23).

JAMES ROWLANDS was re-elected for East Finsbury against a Conservative, by 2,353 to 2,093.

JOSEPH ARCH was elected for North-West Norfolk against a Conservative, by 4,911 to 3,822.

JOHN WILSON was re-elected for Mid-Durham against a Conservative, by 5,661 to 3,669.

SAMUEL WOODS, of the Lancashire Miners, was elected for Ince against a Conservative, by 4,579 to 4,352.

DR. G. B. CLARK was re-elected for Caithness-shire against a Liberal-Unionist, by 2,134 to 693.

Three Independent Labour M.P.s were elected, as follows :

JOHN BURNS was elected for Battersea against a Conservative, by 5,616 to 4,057.

JAMES KEIR HARDIE was elected for West Ham, South, against a Conservative, by 5,268 to 4,036, after *Joseph Leicester*, the 'Lib.-Lab.', had withdrawn.

JAMES HAVELOCK WILSON was elected for Middlesbrough by 4,691 against a Liberal (4,062) and a Liberal-Unionist (3,333).

The following three Irish Labour M.P.s were elected :

MICHAEL AUSTIN was elected for Co. Limerick, West, against a Parnellite, by 3,257 to 858. Austin was Secretary of the Irish Democratic Labour Federation, and a compositor by trade.

E. CREAN was elected for Ossory, Queen's County, against a Conservative, by 3,666 to 523. Crean was Secretary of an Irish Trade Union, and a supporter of Michael Davitt.

MICHAEL DAVITT, of the Irish Land League, was elected for North Meath against a Parnellite, by 2,549 to 2,146, but was unseated on petition.

Henry Broadhurst was defeated at West Nottingham by a Liberal-Unionist, by 5,610 to 5,309.

R. B. Cunninghame Graham, standing as a Labour candidate, was defeated in the Camlachie division of Glasgow by a Liberal-Unionist (3,455). A Liberal was second with 3,084, Graham third with 908, and another Liberal fourth with 179.

Other Independent Labour candidates included the following: *Ben Tillett*, at East Bradford (Liberal 3,306, Conservative 3,053, Labour 2,749); *Frank Smith*, at Hammersmith (Conservative 4,387, Labour 3,718); *W. K. Hall*, at South Salford (Conservative 3,406, Liberal 3,369, Labour 553); *Robert Donald*, at Shoreditch, Hoxton (Liberal 3,410, Conservative 2,114, Labour 19); *John Ward*, at Aston Manor (Conservative 5,300, Labour 1,313); *Benjamin Ellis*, at Peckham (Conservative 3,847, Liberal 3,664, Labour 95); *E. Dillon Lewis*, at Jarrow (Liberal 7,343, Labour 2,416); *George Bateman*, at Holborn (Conservative 4,749, Labour 2,477).

In Scotland there were a number of contests. *Henry Hyde Champion*, in South Aberdeen, got 991 votes against the Liberal's 3,513 and the Conservative's 1,768. *James Macdonald*, of the Tailors' Union, at Dundee (2 seats), got 354 votes against the two Liberals' 8,484 and 8,191, and the Conservative and Liberal-Unionist's 5,659 and 5,066. In Central Edinburgh, *John Wilson* got 434 against the Liberal's 3,733 and the Liberal-Unionist's 1,758. In Glasgow, in the College division, *Robert Brodie* got 225 votes against 5,804 for the Liberal and 4,758 for the Conservative; and in the Tradeston division *J. Bennett Burleigh* got 783 against 3,386 for the Liberal-Unionist and 3,197 for the Liberal. In Stirlingshire *R. Chisholm Robertson*, of the Scottish Miners, got 663 votes against 5,296 for the Liberal and 4,550 for the Liberal-Unionist.

'Lib.-Lab.' candidates included the following: At Bordesley, Birmingham, *W. J. Davis*, of the Brassworkers, got 2,658 votes against the Liberal-Unionist, Jesse Collings, who got 6,380. At Central Hull, *Fred Maddison*, the advocate of Co-partnership, got 4,462 votes against the Conservative's 4,938. In the Medway division of Kent, *W. C. Steadman*, of the Barge Builders' Union, was beaten by a Conservative by 6,337 to 4,391. At Liverpool (Kirkdale), *T. R. Threlfall* was defeated by the Conservative by 3,750 to 2,773. In East Sussex, *G. M. Ball*, of the Agricultural Labourers' Union, got 3,988 votes to the Conservative's 4,699. At Tamworth, *William Johnson*, of the Warwickshire Miners, got 2,702 to the Conservative's 5,128. At Wigan, *Thomas Aspinwall*, of the Lancashire Miners, was narrowly beaten by a Conservative by 3,422 to 3,312. At Woolwich, *Benjamin Jones*, the Co-operator, went down to a Conservative by 5,922 to 4,100. *Major Eustace Edwards*, at Dover, stood on the issue of public

ownership, and was beaten by a Conservative by 2,231 to 978.

Henry Broadhurst made an unsuccessful attempt to re-enter Parliament at Grimsby in 1893, when he was beaten by a Liberal-Unionist by 4,427 to 3,463. He was elected for Leicester (2 members) in 1894, in a double by-election. The voting was 9,464 for Broadhurst and 7,184 for his Liberal colleague, against 6,967 for a Conservative, and 4,402 for *Joseph Burgess*, who stood against him as an Independent Labour candidate.

In 1895, on the death of *William Saunders*, founder of the Central News Agency, who had been elected at Walworth in 1892, *George Lansbury* stood as a Socialist, getting 347 votes, against 2,676 for the Conservative and 2,105 for the Liberal.

In March, 1895, *Hugh Holmes Gore*, a Bristol solicitor and Christian Socialist, fought East Bristol with the support of all the local Labour bodies, and was beaten only by 3,740 to 3,558 in a straight fight with a Liberal.

1895. The Independent Labour Party had been founded in 1893. This was the first General Election at which its candidates made their challenge.

THOMAS BURT was re-elected for Morpeth by 3,404 to 1,235, against Maltman Barry, former member of the First International, who now stood as a Conservative.

CHARLES FENWICK was re-elected for Wansbeck by 5,627 to 2,422, against a Conservative.

BENJAMIN PICKARD was re-elected for Normanton by 5,499 to 3,941, against a Conservative.

WILLIAM ABRAHAM was re-elected unopposed for the Rhondda.

JOSEPH ARCH was re-elected for North-West Norfolk by 4,817 to 3,520, against a Conservative.

JOHN WILSON was re-elected for Mid-Durham by 5,937 to 4,295, against a Liberal-Unionist.

DR. G. B. CLARK was re-elected for Caithness-shire by 1,828 to 528, against a Liberal-Unionist.

HENRY BROADHURST was re-elected for Leicester (2 seats). The voting was, Broadhurst 9,792, Liberal 7,753, Conservative 7,654, *Joseph Burgess*, Labour, 4,009.

JOHN BURNS was re-elected for Battersea by 5,010 to 4,766, against a Conservative. Burns was already developing into a ' Lib.-Lab.'

JAMES HAVELOCK WILSON was re-elected for Middlesbrough, as a 'Lib.-Lab.', by 6,755 to 4,735, against a Conservative.

MICHAEL AUSTIN was re-elected unopposed for West Limerick.

E. CREAN was re-elected for Ossory, Queen's County, by 2,986, against 630 for a Conservative, and 383 for a Parnellite.

MICHAEL DAVITT was elected unopposed for South Mayo. He was also elected for East Kerry, but elected to sit for Mayo.

James Keir Hardie was defeated at West Ham, South, by 4,750 to 3,975, by a Conservative.

W. R. Cremer was defeated at Haggerston by 2,276 to 2,245, by a Conservative.

George Howell was defeated at North-East Bethnal Green by 2,591 to 2,431, by a Conservative.

James Rowlands was defeated at East Finsbury by 2,260 to 1,990, by a Conservative.

Samuel Woods, the Miners' leader, was defeated at Ince by 5,236 to 4,790, by a Conservative.

The Independent Labour Party put into the field 28 candidates, including Keir Hardie. Eight of these were in Lancashire and Cheshire, seven in Yorkshire, and seven in Scotland. The results are most easily set out in tabular form.

I.L.P. candidates, 1895:

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative's Vote or Liberal-Unionist.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Lancs. and Cheshire	Rochdale	*G. N. Barnes*	1,251	4,359	4,781	—	Cons.
,,	Bolton (2 seats)	*Fred Brocklehurst*	2,694	8,453	8,494 7,901	—	Cons. and Lib.
,,	Hyde	*G. S. Christie*	448	3,844	4,735	—	Cons.
,,	Barrow	*Pete Curran*	414	2,355	3,312	—	Cons.
,,	Manchester, North-East	*J. E. Johnstone*	546	3,720	3,961	—	Cons.
,,	Gorton	*R. M. Pankhurst*	4,261	—	5,865	—	Cons.
,,	Ashton-under-Lyne	*James Sexton*	415	2,680	3,434	—	Cons.
,,	Preston (2 seats)	*James Tattersall*	4,781	—	8,928 7,622	—	2 Cons.
Yorkshire	Dewsbury	*E. R. Hartley*	1,080	5,379	3,875	—	Lib.
,,	Halifax (2 seats)	*John Lister*	3,818	5,085 4,283	5,475	—	Cons. and Lib.
,,	Colne Valley	*Tom Mann*	1,245	4,276	3,737	—	Lib.
,,	Hull, West	*Tom McCarthy*	1,400	6,637	—	—	Lib.
,,	Leeds, South	*Arthur Shaw*	622	4,608	4,447	—	Lib.
,,	Huddersfield	*H. Russell Smart*	1,594	6,755	5,868	—	Lib.
,,	Bradford, West	*Ben Tillett*	2,254	3,471	3,938	—	Cons.
Northumberland	Newcastle-on-Tyne (2 seats)	*Fred Hammill*	2,302	11,862 11,154	12,833 12,170	—	2 Cons.
Leicestershire	Leicester (2 seats)	*Joseph Burgess*	4,009	9,792 (Broadhurst) 7,753	7,654	—	1 Lib.-Lab., 1 Lib.

Gloucestershire	Bristol, East	*S. G. Hobson*	1,874	4,129	—	—	Lib.
Hampshire	Southampton (2 seats)	*James Ramsay MacDonald*	866	5,167 4,159 (Lib.-Lab.)	5,955 5,413	—	2 Cons.
Essex	West Ham, South	*James Keir Hardie*	3,975	—	4,750	—	Cons.
London	Fulham	*W. Parnell*	191	3,915	5,378	—	Cons.
Scotland	Lanark, Govan	*Alexander Haddow*	430	4,290	4,029	—	Lib.
,,	Dundee (2 seats)	*James Macdonald*	354	7,602 7,592	5,390 4,318	—	2 Libs.
,,	Glasgow, Blackfriars	*J. Shaw Maxwell*	448	3,108	2,727	—	Lib.
,,	Glasgow, Camlachie	*Robert Smillie*	696	2,497	3,198	—	Cons.
,,	Glasgow Tradeston	*Frank Smith*	368	2,568	3,373	—	Cons.
,,	Glasgow, Bridgeton	*J. R. Watson*	609	3,161	2,719	—	Lib.
,,	Glasgow, St. Rollox	*J. E. Woolacott*	405	4,200	4,561	—	Cons.

The Social Democratic Federation fought four seats.

Lancashire	Salford, South	*H. W. Hobart*	813	3,310	3,384	—	Cons.
,,	Burnley	*Henry Mayers Hyndman*	1,493	5,454	5,133	—	Lib.
Northants	Northampton (2 seats)	*F. G. Jones*	1,216	4,884 3,703 (Lib.-Lab.)	3,820 3,394	1,131 (Ind. Lib.)	1 Lib., 1 Cons.
London	Newington, Walworth	*George Lansbury*	203	2,269	2,822	—	Cons.

Other Labour and Socialist candidates in 1895 included :

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative's Vote or Liberal-Unionist.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Scotland	Aberdeen, North	*J. L. Mahon*	608	4,156	—	—	Lib.
Wales	Swansea Boroughs	*E. Hall Hedley*	2,018	3,850	1,851	—	Lib.
,,	Merthyr Tydfil (2 seats)	*Allen Upward*	659	9,250 8,554	6,525	—	2 Libs.
Gloucestershire	Cheltenham	*A. W. Hillen*	23	2,940	3,409	—	Cons.

The following were among the defeated 'Lib.-Lab.' candidates, in addition to sitting M.P.s who were beaten :

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative's Vote or Liberal-Unionist.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Lancs. and Cheshire	Wigan	*T. Aspinwall*	3,075	—	3,949	—	Cons.
Yorkshire	Hull, Central	*Fred Maddison*	3,515	—	5,476	—	Cons.
Lincolnshire	Horncastle	*J. Bruce Wallace*	3,022	—	4,563	—	Cons.
Northants	Northampton (2 seats)	*Edward Harford*	3,701	4,884	3,820 3,394	1,216 (Soc.) 1,131 (Ind. Lib.)	1 Lib., 1 Cons.
Warwickshire	Aston Manor	*J. Lawson*	1,675	—	5,353	—	Cons.
Middlesex	Tottenham	*Clement Edwards*	3,817	—	6,388	—	Cons.
Kent	Gravesend	*L. M. Johnson*	1,218	—	2,405	—	Cons.
London	Hammersmith	*W. C. Steadman*	3,238	—	5,017	—	Cons.
,,	Woolwich	*Benjamin Jones*	3,857	—	6,662	—	Cons.
,,	Limehouse	*W. M. Thompson*	2,071	—	2,661	—	Cons.
Hampshire	Southampton (2 seats)	*H. G. Wilson*	4,159	5,167	5,955 5,413	866 (Lab.)	2 Cons.
Scotland	Greenock	*A. E. Fletcher*	2,753	—	3,571	—	Cons.

In February, 1897, *Samuel Woods*, of the Miners' Federation, Secretary of the Trades Union Congress, won a seat at Walthamstow, beating a Conservative by 6,518 to 6,239, in a straight fight. In August of the same year, *Fred Maddison* won the Brightside division of Sheffield, in a similar contest, by 4,289 to 4,106. In 1898 *W. C. Steadman*, again in a straight fight with a Conservative, won Stepney by 2,492 to 2,472.

The I.L.P. fought four by-elections between 1895 and 1900. In May, 1896, *Tom Mann* got 2,479 votes to 2,909 in a straight fight with a Liberal at North Aberdeen. In November, 1896, *J. Keir Hardie*, at East Bradford, got 1,953 against 4,921 for the Conservative and 4,526 for the Liberal. In March, 1897, at Halifax, *Tom Mann* got 2,000 votes, against the Liberal's 5,664 and the Conservative's 5,252. Finally, in October, 1897, at Barnsley, *Pete Curran* got 1,091 votes to 6,744 for the Liberal and 3,454 for the Conservative.

There were two S.D.F. contests. In February, 1896, at Southampton, *C. A. Gibson* got 273 votes to the Liberal's 5,557 and the Conservative's 5,522. In July, 1898, *Harry Quelch* fought Reading, getting 270 votes to the Liberal's 4,600 and the Conservative's 3,906.

During this period *James Mawdsley*, a leader of the Lancashire Cotton Spinners, stood for Oldham in a double by-election as a Conservative. The two Liberals got 12,976 and 12,770 votes, the other Conservative 11,477, and Mawdsley 11,449.

V

FROM THE FORMATION OF THE LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE TO 1914

1900. This was the 'Khaki Election', the first in which L.R.C. candidates took part.

THOMAS BURT was re-elected for Morpeth against Maltman Barry by 3,117 votes to 2,707.

CHARLES FENWICK was re-elected for Wansbeck against a Conservative by 5,474 to 4,288.

BENJAMIN PICKARD was re-elected for Normanton against a Conservative by 5,025 to 3,606.

WILLIAM ABRAHAM was re-elected for the Rhondda against a Conservative by 8,383 to 1,874.

JOHN WILSON was re-elected for Mid-Durham against a Conservative by 5,565 to 4,105.

HENRY BROADHURST was re-elected for Leicester, running in partnership with a Liberal against a Conservative and James Ramsay MacDonald. The votes were, Broadhurst 10,385, Conservative 9,066, Liberal 8,528, MacDonald 4,164.

W. R. CREMER won back his seat at Haggerston against a Conservative by 2,290 to 2,266.

JOHN BURNS was re-elected at Battersea against a Conservative by 5,860 to 5,603.

E. CREAN was elected for South-East Cork against an Independent Nationalist by 2,037 to 1,509.

M. JOYCE, a pilot and a leader of the United Irish League, was elected for Limerick City against a Conservative by 2,521 to 474.

The Labour Representation Committee had two victories :

JAMES KEIR HARDIE was elected for Merthyr Tydfil (2 seats). The voting was, Liberal 8,598, Hardie 5,745, Liberal 4,004. There was no Conservative.

RICHARD BELL, of the Railway Servants, was elected for Derby (2 seats). The voting was, Liberal 7,917, Bell 7,640, Conservatives 7,389 and 6,776. This was really a ' Lib.-Lab.' victory, as appeared when Bell left the L.R.C. to rejoin the Liberals in 1904.

Of the sitting ' Lib.-Labs.', *Joseph Arch* did not stand again. *Samuel Woods* was beaten by a Conservative at Walthamstow, by 9,807 votes to 7,342. *Fred Maddison* lost Brightside to a Conservative by 4,028 to 4,992. *W. C. Steadman* lost Stepney to a Conservative by 1,718 to 2,783. *James Havelock Wilson* was beaten by a Conservative at Middlesbrough, by 6,760 to 6,705. *Dr. G. B. Clark* was beaten in a four-cornered fight in Caithness, getting only 673 votes to 1,189 for the Liberal, 1,161 for the Conservative, and 141 for an Independent Crofter.

The L.R.C. candidates were mostly under I.L.P. auspices. The I.L.P. nominees included the following:

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Lancashire	Manchester, South-West	*Fred Brocklehurst*	2,398	—	4,017	—	Cons.
"	Rochdale	*Allen Clarke* [1]	901	5,186	5,204	—	Cons.
"	Preston (2 seats)	*J. Keir Hardie*	4,884	—	8,944; 8,067	—	2 Cons.
"	Ashton-under-Lyne	*J. Johnston*	737	2,400	3,543	—	Cons.
"	Blackburn (2 seats)	*Philip Snowden*	7,096	—	11,247; 9,415	—	2 Cons.
Yorkshire	Bradford, West	*F. W. Jowett*	4,949	—	4,990	—	Cons.
"	Halifax (2 seats)	*James Parker*	3,276	5,548; 5,325	5,931	—	1 Cons., 1 Lib.
"	Bradford, East	*J. Sheldon*	111	5,514	6,121	—	Cons.
Midlands	Leicester (2 seats)	*J. Ramsay MacDonald*	4,164	10,385 (Lib.-Lab.); 8,528	9,066	—	1 Lib.-Lab., 1 Cons.
Wales	Merthyr (2 seats)	*J. Keir Hardie*	5,745	8,598; 4,004	—	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.

Other L.R.C. candidates were:

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Durham	Sunderland (2 seats)	*Alexander Wilkie* (Shipwrights)	8,842	9,370	9,617; 9,566	—	2 Cons.
Derbyshire	Derby (2 seats)	*Richard Bell* (Railway Servants)	7,640	7,917	7,389; 6,776	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
Essex	West Ham, South	*Will Thorne*	4,419	—	5,615	—	Cons.

[1] Joint I.L.P. and S.D.F. candidate.

Other Socialist candidates were :

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Lancashire	Accrington	*J. Hempsall*	433	6,585	5,993	—	Lib.
London	Bow and Bromley	*George Lansbury*	2,558	—	4,403	—	Cons.

In addition there were the following Labour or 'Lib.-Lab.' candidates :

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Lancashire	Gorton	*William Ward*	5,241	—	5,761	—	Cons.
Staffordshire	Hanley	*Enoch Edwards* (Miners)	5,944	—	6,586	—	Cons.
Warwick-shire	Nuneaton	*William Johnson* (Miners)	4,432	—	5,736	—	Cons.
,,	Birmingham, East	*J. V. Stevens* (Tin-plate Workers)	2,835	—	4,989	—	Cons.
Worcester-shire	Dudley	*W. Belcher*	5,876	—	6,461	—	Cons.
London	Deptford	*Benjamin Jones* (Co-operator)	3,806	—	6,236	—	Cons.
Wales	Denbigh Boroughs	*Clement Edwards*	1,752	—	1,862	—	Cons.
Scotland	Glasgow, Camlachie	*A. E. Fletcher*	3,107	—	4,345	—	Cons.
,,	Glasgow, Tradeston	*William Maxwell* (Co-operator)	2,785	—	4,389	—	Cons.

The Labour Representation Committee lost *Richard Bell*, who seceded to the 'Lib.-Labs.' in 1904. But it won three seats at by-elections between 1900 and 1906. In August, 1902, *David J. Shackleton*, of the Lancashire Weavers, was returned unopposed for the Clitheroe division of Lancashire. In March, 1903, *Will Crooks*, of the Coopers' Union and the Fabian Society, won Woolwich in a straight fight with a Conservative by 8,687 to 5,458. In July, 1903, *Arthur Henderson*, of the Ironfounders, won Barnard Castle in a three-cornered fight by 3,370 to the Conservative's 3,323 and the Liberal's 2,809.

The Miners also won a seat. *Thomas Richards*, of the South Wales Miners, was elected in November, 1904, for West Monmouth, in a straight fight with a Tariff Reformer, by 7,995 to 3,360. Further, on the death of Benjamin Pickard in March, 1904, *William Parrott*, of the Yorkshire Miners, was elected for Normanton by 6,855 votes against 2,909 for the Conservative. A further 'Lib.-Lab.' gain was made at Gateshead in January, 1904, when *J. Johnson* was elected by 8,220 against 7,015 for the Conservative.

The following further by-elections were fought by Labour candidates between 1900 and 1905 :

Date.		Constituency.	Candidate.	Representing	Vote	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Victor.
1901.	Sept.	Lanarkshire, North-East	*Robert Smillie*	Scottish Miners	2,900	4,769	5,673	Cons.
1902.	Jan.	Dewsbury	*Harry Quelch*	S.D.F.	1,597	5,669	4,512	Lib.
	March	Wakefield	*Philip Snowden*	L.R.C.	1,979	—	2,960	Cons.
1903.	May	Preston	*John Hodge*	L.R.C.	6,490	—	8,639	Cons.
1904.	Jan.	Norwich	*G. H. Roberts*	L.R.C.	2,440	8,576	6,756	Lib.
	Aug.	Lanarkshire, North-East	*John Robertson*	Scottish Miners	3,984	5,619	4,677	Lib.
1905.	Sept.	Belfast, North	*William Walker*	L.R.C.	3,966	—	4,440	Cons.

1906. From this point the L.R.C. adopted the name of 'Labour Party'. The L.R.C. made large gains, and there was also an accession to the ranks of the 'Lib.-Labs.', especially among the Miners.

THOMAS BURT was re-elected for Morpeth against a Conservative by 5,518 to 1,919.

CHARLES FENWICK was re-elected for Wansbeck against a Conservative by 10,386 to 3,210.

WILLIAM ABRAHAM was re-elected unopposed for the Rhondda.

JOHN WILSON was re-elected unopposed for Mid-Durham.

HENRY BROADHURST was re-elected for Leicester with 14,745 votes. *J. Ramsay MacDonald* won the other seat with 14,685 (see below). The single Conservative got 7,504.

W. R. CREMER was re-elected for Haggerston against a Conservative by 2,772 to 2,371.

JOHN BURNS was re-elected for Battersea against a Conservative by 7,387 to 5,787.

J. JOHNSON was re-elected for Gateshead against a Conservative by 9,651 to 5,126.

THOMAS RICHARDS was re-elected unopposed for West Monmouth.

JAMES ROWLANDS was elected for Dartford against a Conservative by 9,532 to 6,728.

JAMES HAVELOCK WILSON was elected for Middlesbrough against a Conservative and a Socialist by 9,251 to the Conservative's 6,870 and the Socialist's 1,380.

W. C. STEADMAN was elected for Central Finsbury against a Conservative by 3,493 to 2,799.

FRED MADDISON was elected for Burnley against a Conservative and a Socialist by 5,288 to the Conservative's 4,964 and the Socialist's 4,932.

RICHARD BELL was re-elected for Derby, as a Liberal, with 10,239 votes, the other Liberal polling 10,361 and the two Conservatives 6,421 and 6,409.

In addition, Miners' candidates won the following seats :

FRED HALL was elected unopposed for Normanton.

JOHN WADSWORTH was elected for Hallamshire against a Conservative by 8,375 to 6,807.

ENOCH EDWARDS was elected for Hanley against a Conservative by 9,183 to 4,287.

WILLIAM JOHNSON was elected for Nuneaton against a Conservative by 7,677 to 5,849.

JAMES HASLAM was elected for Chesterfield against a Conservative by 7,254 to 5,590.

WILLIAM BRACE was elected for South Glamorgan against a Conservative by 10,514 to 6,096.

JOHN WILLIAMS was elected for Gower in a three-cornered fight, by 4,841 against 4,542 for the Liberal and 1,939 for the Conservative.

This list does not include Miners elected under L.R.C. auspices (see below).

Other 'Lib.-Lab.' victories included the following:

HENRY VIVIAN, the advocate of Co-partnership, was elected for Birkenhead in a fight against two Conservatives, by 7,074 to 5,271 and 2,118.

ARTHUR RICHARDSON was elected for South Nottingham against a Conservative by 6,314 to 5,514.

GEORGE NICHOLS, a supporter of the Agricultural Labourers, was elected for North Northants against a Conservative by 4,880 to 4,195.

JOHN WARD, Secretary of the Navvies' Union, was elected for Stoke-on-Trent against a Conservative by 7,660 to 4,288.

The Labour Representation Committee won 30 victories, including one member who joined it after the election. These were as follows :

Area.	Division.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Result.
Lancs. and Cheshire	Manchester, North-East	J. R. CLYNES	5,386	—	2,954	—	Lab.
,,	Barrow-in-Furness	CHARLES DUNCAN	5,167	—	3,395	—	Lab.
,,	Bolton (2 seats)	A. H. GILL	10,416	10,953	6,693	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	St. Helens	THOMAS GLOVER	6,088	—	4,647	—	Lab.
,,	Gorton	JOHN HODGE	8,566	—	4,341	—	Lab.
,,	Manchester, South-West	G. D. KELLEY	4,101	—	2,875	—	Lab.
,,	Preston (2 seats)	J. T. MACPHERSON	10,181	8,538	7,303 / 6,856	—	1 Lab., 1 Lib.
,,	Newton	J. A. SEDDON	6,434	—	5,893	—	Lab.
,,	Clitheroe	D. J. SHACKLETON [1]	12,035	—	3,828	—	Lab.
,,	Blackburn (2 seats)	PHILIP SNOWDEN	10,282	8,892	10,291 / 8,932	—	1 Cons., 1 Lab.
,,	Ince	STEPHEN WALSH	8,046	—	3,410	—	Lab.
,,	Stockport (2 seats)	G. J. WARDLE	7,299	6,544	4,591 / 4,058	—	1 Lab., 1 Lib.
,,	Westhoughton	W. TYSON WILSON	9,262	—	6,134	—	Lab.
Yorkshire	Bradford, West	F. W. JOWETT	4,957	3,580	4,147	—	Lab.
,,	Leeds, East	JAMES O'GRADY	4,299	—	2,208	—	Lab.
,,	Halifax (2 seats)	JAMES PARKER	8,937	9,354	5,041	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
Northumberland	Newcastle-on-Tyne (2 seats)	WALTER HUDSON	18,869	18,423	11,942 / 11,223	—	1 Lab., 1 Lib.
Durham	Barnard Castle	ARTHUR HENDERSON [1]	5,540	—	3,888	—	Lab.
,,	Sunderland (2 seats)	THOMAS SUMMERBELL	13,430	13,620	7,879 / 7,244	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Chester-le-Street	J. W. TAYLOR [2]	8,085	4,606	4,895	—	Lab.

[1] Re-elected. [2] Joined the Labour Party after the election.

Area.	Division	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Result.
Staffordshire	Wolverhampton, West	T. F. RICHARDS	5,767	—	5,588	—	Lab.
Leicestershire	Leicester (2 seats)	JAMES RAMSAY MACDONALD	14,685	14,745 (Lib.-Lab.)	7,504	—	1 Lib.-Lab., 1 Lab.
London	Deptford	CHARLES W. BOWERMAN	6,236	726 (Lib.-Lab.)	4,977	—	Lab.
,,	Woolwich	WILL CROOKS [1]	9,026	—	6,883	—	Lab.
Essex	West Ham, South	WILL THORNE	10,210	—	4,973	—	Lab.
Norfolk	Norwich (2 seats)	GEORGE H. ROBERTS	11,059	10,972	7,460	—	1 Lab., 1 Lib.
Kent	Chatham	J. H. JENKINS	6,692	—	4,020	—	Lab.
Wales	Merthyr (2 seats)	JAMES KEIR HARDIE [1]	10,187	{13,971 7,776}	—	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
Scotland	Glasgow, Blackfriars	GEORGE N. BARNES	3,284	2,058	2,974	—	Lab.
,,	Dundee (2 seats)	ALEXANDER WILKIE	6,833	{9,276 6,122}	{3,865 3,183}	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.

In all, 13 Miners sat as 'Lib.-Labs.' and 3 (Glover, Walsh, and Taylor) as Labour Party Members. The Labour Party numbered 30, and the 'Lib.-Labs.', excluding the Miners, up to 11, including Burns and Broadhurst.

The following L.R.C. candidates were beaten :

Area.	Division.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Result.
Lancs. and Cheshire	Liverpool, Kirkdale	*James Conley*	3,157	—	3,749	—	Cons.
,,	Liverpool, West Toxteth	*James Sexton*	2,592	—	3,373	—	Cons.
,,	Eccles	*Ben Tillett*	3,985	5,841	5,246	—	Lib.
Yorkshire	Dewsbury	*Ben Turner*	2,629	6,764	2,959	—	Lib.

[1] Re-elected

Yorkshire	Huddersfield	*T. Russell Williams*	5,813	6,302	4,391	—	Lib.
”	Leeds, South	*Albert Fox*	4,030	6,200	2,126	—	Lib.
”	Wakefield	*Stanton Coit*	2,068	1,247	2,285	—	Cons.
”	York (2 seats)	*G. H. Stuart*	4,573	6,413	{6,108 / 6,094}	—	1 Lib., 1 Cons.
Durham	Darlington	*Isaac Mitchell*	4,087	—	4,575	—	Cons.
”	Jarrow	*Pete Curran*	5,093	8,047	—	—	Lib.
”	Stockton-on-Tees	*Frank H. Rose*	2,710	3,675	5,330	—	Cons.
Lincolnshire	Grimsby	*Thomas Procter*	2,248	4,040	6,349	—	Cons.
Warwick-shire	Birmingham, Bordesley	*James Bruce Glasier*	3,976	—	7,763	—	Cons.
”	Birmingham, East	*James Holmes*	5,343	—	5,928	—	Cons.
Surrey	Croydon	*S. Stranks*	4,007	7,573	8,211	—	Cons.
Kent	Gravesend	*James Macpherson*	873	1,413	3,102	—	Cons.
Hampshire	Portsmouth (2 seats)	*William Stephen Sanders*	8,172	{10,500 / 10,236}	{7,970 / 7,752}	1,859 (Ind.)	2 Libs.
Wales	Monmouth	*James Winstone*	1,678	4,531	3,939	—	Lib.
Scotland	Glasgow, Camlachie	*Joseph Burgess*	2,568	2,871	3,119	—	Cons.
”	Lanarkshire, Govan	*John Hill*	4,212	5,096	5,224	—	Cons.
Ireland	Belfast, North	*William Walker*	4,616	—	4,907	—	Cons.

In addition, a number of seats in Scotland were contested by the Scottish Workers' Representation Committee, formed by the Scottish Trades Union Congress, and supported chiefly by the Scottish Miners. This was an 'Independent', and not a 'Lib.-Lab.' body. In 1906, its candidates were all miners. They were all defeated, as follows :

Area.	Division.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Result.
Scotland	Lanarkshire, North-East	*John Robertson*	4,658	6,436	4,838	—	Lib.
”	Lanarkshire, North-West	*J. Sullivan*	3,291	4,913	5,588	—	Cons.

Area.	Division.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Result.
Scotland	Ayrshire, North	*James Brown*	2,684	4,587	5,603	—	Cons.
,,	Falkirk Burghs	*David Gilmour*	1,763	5,158	3,176	—	Lib.
,,	Paisley	*Robert Smillie*	2,482	5,664	2,594	—	Lib.

The Social Democratic Federation contested without success the following seats :

Area.	Division.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Result.
Lancs. and Cheshire	Accrington	*Dan Irving*	4,852	7,209	—	619 (Lib.-Lab.)	Lib.
,,	Burnley	*Henry Mayers Hyndman*	4,932	5,288 (Lib.-Lab.)	4,964	—	Lib.-Lab.
Yorkshire	Bradford, East	*E. R. Hartley*	3,090	6,185	4,277	—	Lib.
Northants	Northampton (2 seats)	*J. E. Williams*	2,544	4,479	4,078	—	2 Libs.
		Fred Gribble	2,366	4,244	4,000		
Hampshire	Southampton (2 seats)	*Harry Quelch*	2,146	7,032 6,255	5,754 5,535	—	2 Libs.
Cornwall	Camborne	*Jack Jones*	109	4,613	2,384	—	Lib.
Scotland	Aberdeen, North	*Thomas Kennedy*	1,934	4,848	931	—	Lib.

There were the following other Socialist and Labour candidates :

Area.	Division.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Result.
Lancs. and Cheshire	Rochdale	*S. G. Hobson*	2,506	5,912	4,449	—	Lib.
,,	Wigan	*Frank Smith*	2,205	1,900	3,573	—	Cons.
Yorkshire	Keighley	*W. Newlove*	3,102	5,322	3,229	—	Lib.
,,	Middlesbrough	*George Lansbury*	1,380	9,251 (Lib.-Lab.)	6,870	—	Lib.-Lab.
London	Hammersmith	*George Belt*	885	4,562	5,111	—	Cons.

[*Henry Broadhurst* retired in 1906, and was succeeded by a Liberal, without Labour opposition. In July, 1907, *Pete Curran* was elected for Jarrow in a four-cornered fight (Curran 4,698, Conservative 3,930, Liberal 3,474, Irish Nationalist 2,124). In May, 1909, *Joseph Pointer* was elected in the Attercliffe division of Sheffield, also in a four-cornered fight (Pointer 3,521, Conservative 3,380, Liberal 3,175, Independent Conservative 2,803). These were the only official Labour Party victories before 1910. But in July, 1907, *Victor Grayson* was elected for Colne Valley as an Independent Socialist (Grayson 3,648, Liberal 3,495, Conservative 3,227).

The Miners also had further victories. In January, 1907, *W. E. Harvey*, of the Derbyshire Miners, was elected for North-East Derbyshire against a Conservative, by 8,715 votes to 6,411. In July of the same year *Albert Stanley*, of the Staffordshire Miners, was elected for North-West Staffordshire by 7,396 against the Conservative's 5,047. In July, 1909, *J. G. Hancock*, of the Derbyshire Miners, was elected for Mid-Derby by 6,735 to the Conservative's 4,392. This last election occurred after the Miners' Federation had decided to join the Labour Party; but Hancock insisted on standing under Liberal auspices and was not accepted as an official Labour candidate.]

The Labour Party unsuccessfully fought the following by-elections :

Date.		Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
1906.	Aug.	Cockermouth	*Robert Smillie*	1,436	3,903	4,593	—	Cons.
	Nov.	Huddersfield	*R. Russell Williams*	5,422	5,762	4,818	—	Lib.
1907.	April	Belfast, North	*William Walker*	4,194	—	6,021	—	Cons.
	Sept.	Liverpool, Kirkdale	*John Hill*	3,330	—	4,000	—	Cons.
	Nov.	Hull, West	*James Holmes*	4,512	5,623	5,382	—	Lib.
1908.	Feb.	Leeds, South	*Albert Fox*	2,451	5,274	4,915	—	Lib.
	April	Dewsbury	*Ben Turner*	2,446	5,594	4,078	—	Lib.
	May	Dundee	*G. H. Stuart*	4,014	7,079	4,370	658 (Prohibition)	Lib.
	May	Montrose Burghs	*Joseph Burgess*	1,937	3,803	1,576	—	Lib.
1909.	Feb.	Taunton	*Frank Smith*	1,085	—	1,976	—	Cons.
	March	Croydon	*Frank Smith*	886	8,041	11,989	—	Cons.
	Oct.	Bermondsey	*Alfred Salter*	1,435	3,291	4,278	—	Cons.
	Dec.	Portsmouth	*William Stephen Sanders*	No writ issued owing to Dissolution.				

In addition Socialist and other Labour candidates unsuccessfully fought the following elections :

1907.	Feb.	Aberdeen, South	*Fred Bramley* (Soc.)	1,740	3,779	3,412	—	Lib.
1908.	April	Manchester, North-West	*Dan Irving* (S.D.F.)	276	4,988	5,417	—	Cons.
	June	Pudsey	*J. W. Benson* (S.D.F.)	1,291	5,331	5,444	—	Cons.
	Aug.	Haggerston	*Herbert Burrows* (S.D.F.)	986	1,724	2,867	—	Cons.
	Sept.	Newcastle-on-Tyne	*E. R. Hartley* (S.D.F.)	2,971	11,720	13,863	—	Cons.

There was one 'Lib.-Lab.' candidature :

1907.	May	Stepney	*Ben Cooper*	1,350	—	2,299	—	Cons.

1910. January.

The Labour Party, now reinforced by most of the Miners' candidates, came back to Parliament 40 strong, as follows :

Area.	Division.	M.P.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Lancs. and Cheshire	Manchester, North-East	J. R. CLYNES	5,157	—	3,679	—	Lab.
,,	Barrow-in-Furness	CHARLES DUNCAN [1]	5,304	—	4,298	—	Lab.
,,	Bolton (2 seats)	A. H. GILL [1]	11,864	12,275	{7,479 / 7,326}	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	St. Helens	THOMAS GLOVER [1]	6,512	—	5,717	—	Lab.
,,	Gorton	JOHN HODGE [1]	7,807	—	7,334	—	Lab.
,,	Newton	J. A. SEDDON [1]	7,256	—	6,504	—	Lab.
,,	Clitheroe	D. J. SHACKLETON [1]	13,872	—	6,726	—	Lab.
,,	Blackburn (2 seats)	PHILIP SNOWDEN [1]	11,916	12,064	{9,307 / 9,112}	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Manchester, East	J. E. SUTTON	6,110	—	5,091	—	Lab.
,,	Wigan	HARRY TWIST	4,803	—	4,293	—	Lab.
,,	Ince	STEPHEN WALSH [1]	7,723	—	5,029	—	Lab.
,,	Stockport (2 seats)	G. J. WARDLE [1]	6,682	6,645	{5,268 / 5,249}	—	1 Lab., 1 Lib.
,,	Westhoughton	W. TYSON WILSON [1]	10,141	—	7,709	—	Lab.
Yorkshire	Normanton	FRED HALL [1]	9,172	—	3,540	—	Lab.
,,	Bradford, West	F. W. JOWETT [1]	8,880	—	4,461	—	Lab.
,,	Leeds, East	JAMES O'GRADY [1]	5,373	—	2,308	—	Lab.
,,	Halifax (2 seats)	JAMES PARKER [1]	9,093	9,504	4,754	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Sheffield, Attercliffe	JOSEPH POINTER [1]	7,755	—	6,079	—	Lab.
,,	Hallamshire	JOHN WADSWORTH [1]	10,193	—	6,185	—	Lab.
Northumberland	Newcastle-on-Tyne (2 seats)	WALTER HUDSON [1]	18,241	18,779	{14,067 / 13,928}	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
Durham	Barnard Castle	ARTHUR HENDERSON [1]	6,136	—	4,646	—	Lab.

[1] Re-elected.

Area.	Division.	M.P.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Durham	Chester-le-Street	J. W. TAYLOR [1]	12,684	—	6,891	—	Lab.
Staffordshire	Hanley	ENOCH EDWARDS [1]	9,199	—	5,202	—	Lab.
,,	North-West Staffordshire	ALBERT STANLEY [1]	8,566	—	5,754	—	Lab.
Derbyshire	Derbyshire, Mid-	J. G. HANCOCK [1]	7,557	—	4,268	—	Lab.
,,	Derbyshire, North-East	W. E. HARVEY [1]	8,715	—	6,411	—	Lab.
,,	Derbyshire, Chesterfield	JAMES HASLAM [1]	8,234	—	5,693	—	Lab.
,,	Derby (2 seats)	JAMES H. THOMAS	10,180	10,343	8,038 7,953	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
Leicestershire	Leicester (2 seats)	JAMES RAMSAY MACDONALD	14,337	14,613	8,548 8,192	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
Warwickshire	Nuneaton	WILLIAM JOHNSON [1]	8,154	—	7,893	—	Lab.
Norfolk	Norwich (2 seats)	G. H. ROBERTS [1]	11,119	11,257	8,480 7,981	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
Essex	West Ham, South	WILL THORNE [1]	11,791	—	6,909	—	Lab.
London	Deptford	C. W. BOWERMAN [1]	6,880	—	6,358	—	Lab.
Wales	Rhondda	WILLIAM ABRAHAM [1]	12,436	—	3,471	—	Lab.
,,	Glamorgan, South	WILLIAM BRACE [1]	11,612	—	7,411	—	Lab.
,,	Merthyr (2 seats)	JAMES KEIR HARDIE [1]	13,841	15,448 3,639	4,756	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Monmouthshire, West	THOMAS RICHARDS [1]	13,295	—	3,045	—	Lab.
,,	Gower	JOHN WILLIAMS [1]	9,312	—	2,532	—	Lab.
Scotland	Glasgow, Blackfriars	G. N. BARNES [1]	4,496	—	2,796	—	Lab.
,,	Dundee (2 seats)	ALEXANDER WILKIE [1]	10,365	10,747	4,552 4,339	1,512 (Prohibition)	1 Lib., 1 Lab.

The 'Lib.-Labs.' were now reduced to 3 Miners and 3 others, counting John Burns, etc.

Miners							
Northum-berland	Morpeth	THOMAS BURT	5,874	—	3,009	—	Lib.-Lab.
,,	Wansbeck	CHARLES FENWICK	10,872	—	4,650	—	Lib.-Lab.
Durham	Durham, Mid-	JOHN WILSON	Unopposed		—	—	Lib.-Lab.
Others							
London	Battersea	JOHN BURNS	8,540	—	7,985		
Cheshire	Birkenhead	HENRY VIVIAN	8,120	—	7,976		
Stafford-shire	Stoke-on-Trent	JOHN WARD	7,688	—	5,697		

Four sitting 'Lib.-Labs.' lost their seats. These were :

M.P.	Constituency.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Victor.
W. C. Steadman	Finsbury, Central	3,187	—	3,559	Cons.
James Rowlands	Dartford	8,890	—	9,807	Cons.
George Nichols	Northants, North	4,429	—	5,520	Cons.
A. Richardson	Nottingham, South	6,052	—	6,434	Cons.

Seven sitting Labour M.P.s were defeated. They were :

J. T. Macpherson	Preston (2 seats)	7,539	6,281 2,704	9,526 9,160	2 Cons.
J. Johnson	Gateshead	3,572	6,800	6,323	Lib.
Pete Curran	Jarrow	4,818	4,885	4,668	Lib.
Thomas Summerbell	Sunderland (2 seats)	11,058	11,529	12,334 12,270	2 Cons.
T. F. Richards	Wolverhampton, West	5,790	—	6,382	Cons.
Will Crooks	Woolwich	8,420	—	8,715	Cons.
J. H. Jenkins	Chatham	6,130	—	7,411	Cons.

The only independent Socialist lost his seat :

Victor Grayson	Colne Valley	3,149	4,741	3,750	Lib.

The following were the other defeated Labour Party candidates :

Area.	Division.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Lancs. and Cheshire	Manchester, South-West	*J. McLachlan*	1,218	3,004	3,111	—	Cons.
,,	Salford, West	*A. A. Purcell*	2,396	6,216	5,238	—	Lib.
,,	Liverpool, Kirkdale	*A. G. Cameron*	3,921	—	4,144	—	Cons.
,,	Liverpool, West Toxteth	*James Sexton*	2,909	—	3,928	—	Cons.
,,	Eccles	*G. H. Stuart*	3,511	7,093	6,682	—	Lib.
,,	Leigh	*Thomas Greenall*	3,268	5,325	4,646	—	Lib.
,,	Crewe	*Frank H. Rose*	1,380	7,761	5,419	—	Lib.
,,	Hyde	*W. C. Anderson*	2,401	4,476	4,461	—	Lib.
Yorkshire	Huddersfield	*Harry Snell*	5,686	7,158	5,153	—	Lib.
,,	Wakefield	*Stanton Coit*	2,602	—	3,121	—	Cons.
,,	Middlesbrough	*Patrick Walls*	2,710	9,670	6,756	—	Lib.
,,	Holmfirth	*William Pickles*	1,643	6,339	3,043	—	Lib.
,,	Morley	*Herbert Smith*	2,191	8,026	3,395	—	Lib.
,,	Spen Valley	*J. Russell Williams*	2,914	4,817	3,439	—	Lib.
Durham	Bishop Auckland	*William House*	3,579	5,391	3,841	—	Lib.
Cumberland	Cockermouth	*J. P. Whitehead*	1,909	3,638	4,579	—	Cons.
,,	Whitehaven	*A. Sharp*	825	852	1,188	—	Cons.
Warwick-shire	Birmingham, East	*J. J. Stephenson*	3,958	—	8,460	—	Cons.
,,	Birmingham, Bordesley	*Fred Hughes*	3,453	—	9,021	—	Cons.
London	Bow and Bromley	*George Lansbury*	2,955	2,167	3,695	—	Cons.
Gloucester-shire	Bristol, East	*Frank Sheppard*	2,255	6,804	4,033	—	Lib.
,,	Tewkesbury	*C. H. Fox*	238	5,088	6,050	—	Cons.
Hampshire	Portsmouth (2 seats)	*William Stephen Sanders*	3,529	12,397 9,965	16,777 15,592	—	2 Cons.

Wales	Swansea Borough	*Ben Tillett*	1,451	6,020	4,375	—	Lib.
Scotland	Glasgow, Camlachie	*J. O'Connor Kessack*	2,443	2,793	3,227	—	Cons.
,,	Lanarkshire, Govan	*J. T. Brownlie*	3,543	6,558	5,128	—	Lib.
,,	Lanarkshire, Mid-	*Robert Smillie*	3,864	5,792	5,401	—	Lib.
,,	Lanarkshire, North-East	*J. Sullivan*	2,160	9,105	7,012	—	Lib.
,,	Lanarkshire, North-West	*William Small*	1,718	8,422	7,528	—	Lib.
,,	Ayrshire, North	*James Brown*	1,801	6,189	5,951	—	Lib.
,,	Fife, West	*William Adamson*	4,736	6,159	1,994	—	Lib.
,,	Leith	*William Walker*	2,724	7,146	4,540	—	Lib.
,,	Montrose Burghs	*Joseph Burgess*	1,888	3,606	1,592	—	Lib.
Ireland	Belfast, North	*R. Gageby*	3,951	—	6,275	—	Cons.

The following Socialist candidates were defeated :

Lancs. and Cheshire	Ashton-under-Lyne	*William Gee*	413	4,039	3,746	—	Lib.
,,	Burnley	*H. M. Hyndman*	4,948	5,681 (Lib.-Lab.)	5,776	—	Cons.
,,	Rochdale	*Dan Irving*	1,755	6,809	5,381	—	Lib.
Yorkshire	Bradford, East	*E. R. Hartley*	1,740	7,709	5,014	—	Lib.
,,	Sheffield, Brightside	*Charles Lapworth*	510	6,156	4,200	—	Lib.
Cumberland	Carlisle	*A. C. Bannington*	777	3,270	2,815	—	Lib.
Northants	Northampton (2 seats)	*J. Gribble*	1,792	5,398	4,569	—	2 Libs.
		Harry Quelch	1,617	5,289	4,469		
London	Haggerston	*Herbert Burrows*	701	3,041	2,585	—	Lib.
Scotland	Aberdeen, North	*Thomas Kennedy*	1,344	4,297	2,314	—	Lib.

There was one new 'Lib.-Lab.' Trade Union candidature :

Yorkshire	Sheffield, Central	*A. J. Bailey*	3,440	—	3,829	—	Cons.

The Labour Party fought two by-elections between the two General Elections of 1910. In March *Vernon Hartshorn*, of the South Wales Miners, fought Mid-Glamorgan against a Liberal only, and was beaten by 8,920 to 6,210. In July *A. G. Cameron* again fought the Kirkdale division of Liverpool against a Conservative, and was beaten by 4,268 to 3,427.

1910. December.

The Labour Party won 42 seats—a net gain of two. The successful candidates were :

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Lancs. and Cheshire	Manchester, North-East	J. R. CLYNES	4,313	—	4,108	—	Lab.
,,	Barrow-in-Furness	CHARLES DUNCAN	4,810	—	4,290	—	Lab.
,,	Bolton (2 seats)	A. H. GILL	10,108	10,358	8,677	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Gorton	JOHN HODGE	7,840	—	7,187	—	Lab.
,,	Clitheroe	ALBERT SMITH	12,107	—	5,783	—	Lab.
,,	Blackburn (2 seats)	PHILIP SNOWDEN	10,762	10,754	{9,814 / 9,500}	—	1 Lab., 1 Lib.
,,	Manchester, East	J. E. SUTTON	5,524	—	4,653	—	Lab.
,,	Ince	STEPHEN WALSH	7,117	—	5,332	—	Lab.
,,	Stockport (2 seats)	G. J. WARDLE	6,094	6,169	{5,234 / 5,183}	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Westhoughton	W. TYSON WILSON	9,064	—	7,974	—	Lab.
Yorkshire	Normanton	FRED HALL	Unopposed	—	—	—	Lab.
,,	Bradford, West	F. W. JOWETT	7,729	—	4,339	—	Lab.
,,	Leeds, East	JAMES O'GRADY	4,028	—	1,892	—	Lab.
,,	Halifax (2 seats)	JAMES PARKER	8,511	8,778	{4,602 / 4,420}	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Sheffield, Attercliffe	JOSEPH POINTER	6,532	—	5,354	—	Lab.

Yorkshire	Hallamshire	JOHN WADSWORTH	8,708	—	5,837	—	Lab.
Northumberland	Newcastle-on-Tyne (2 seats)	WALTER HUDSON	16,447	16,599	{12,915 / 12,849}	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
Durham	Barnard Castle	ARTHUR HENDERSON	5,868	—	4,423	—	Lab.
,,	Sunderland (2 seats)	F. W. GOLDSTONE	11,291	11,997	{10,300 / 10,132}	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Chester-le-Street	J. W. TAYLOR	Unopposed	—	—	—	Lab.
Cumberland	Whitehaven	THOMAS RICHARDSON	1,414	—	1,220	—	Lab.
Staffordshire	Staffordshire, North-West	ALBERT STANLEY	8,125	—	4,940	—	Lab.
,,	Hanley	ENOCH EDWARDS	8,343	—	4,658	—	Lab.
Derbyshire	Derby (2 seats)	JAMES H. THOMAS	9,144	9,515	8,160	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Derbyshire, Mid-	J. G. HANCOCK	6,557	—	4,287	—	Lab.
,,	,, North-East	W. E. HARVEY	7,838	—	6,088	—	Lab.
,,	Derbyshire, Chesterfield	JAMES HASLAM	7,283	—	5,055	—	Lab.
Leicestershire	Leicester (2 seats)	JAMES RAMSAY MACDONALD	12,998	13,238	7,547	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
Warwickshire	Nuneaton	WILLIAM JOHNSON	8,199	—	7,501	—	Lab.
Norfolk	Norwich (2 seats)	G. H. ROBERTS	10,003	10,149	7,758	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
Essex	West Ham, South	WILL THORNE	9,508	—	4,820	—	Lab.
London	Deptford	C. W. BOWERMAN	6,357	—	5,999	—	Lab.
,,	Bow and Bromley	GEORGE LANSBURY	4,315	—	3,452	—	Lab.
,,	Woolwich	WILL CROOKS	8,252	—	8,016	—	Lab.
Wales	Merthyr (2 seats)	J. KEIR HARDIE	11,507	12,258	5,277	—	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Rhondda	WILLIAM ABRAHAM	9,073	—	3,701	—	Lab.
,,	Gower	JOHN WILLIAMS	5,480	—	4,527	—	Lab.
,,	Glamorgan, South	WILLIAM BRACE	10,190	—	7,252	—	Lab.

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Wales	Monmouthshire, West	THOMAS RICHARDS	Unopposed	—	—	—	Lab.
Scotland	Glasgow, Blackfriars	G. N. BARNES	4,162	—	2,884	—	Lab.
,,	Dundee (2 seats)	ALEXANDER WILKIE	8,957	9,240	{5,685 4,914}	1,825 (Prohibition)	1 Lib., 1 Lab.
,,	Fife, West	WILLIAM ADAMSON	6,128	5,425	—	—	Lab.

Those elected included 6 'Lib.-Labs.', three of them miners.

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Northumberland	Morpeth	THOMAS BURT	Unopposed	—	—	—	Lib.-Lab.
,,	Wansbeck	CHARLES FENWICK	Unopposed	—	—	—	Lib.-Lab.
Durham	Mid-Durham	JOHN WILSON	Unopposed	—	—	—	Lib.-Lab.
Staffordshire	Stoke-on-Trent	JOHN WARD	7,049	—	5,062	—	Lib.-Lab.
Kent	Dartford	JAMES ROWLANDS	9,152	—	8,918	—	Lib.-Lab.
London	Battersea	JOHN BURNS	7,838	—	6,544	—	Lib.-Lab.

Five new seats were won by the Labour Party, at Sunderland, Whitehaven, Bow and Bromley, Woolwich, and West Fife, and three seats previously held were lost. All the losses were in Lancashire.

J. A. Seddon was beaten in the Newton division by a Conservative, by 6,706 to 6,562.
Thomas Glover was beaten in St. Helens by a Conservative, by 6,016 to 5,752.
Harry Twist was beaten at Wigan by a Conservative, by 4,673 to 4,110.

The 'Lib.-Labs.' had one gain (Rowlands) and one loss, as follows:

Henry Vivian was beaten at Birkenhead by a Conservative, by 8,304 to 7,249.

The Labour Party fought only 16 seats in addition to those already mentioned. The results were as follows :

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Lancs. and Cheshire	Liverpool, Kirkdale	*Thomas McKerrell*	2,992	—	4,205	—	Cons.
,,	Preston (2 seats)	*W. H. Carr*	7,855	8,193	{9,184 / 8,993}	—	2 Cons.
Yorkshire	Huddersfield	*Harry Snell*	4,988	6,458	5,777	—	Lib.
,,	Leeds, South	*J. Badlay*	2,706	6,064	3,804	—	Lib.
Durham	Bishop Auckland	*William House*	3,993	4,531	3,519	—	Lib.
,,	Jarrow	*A. G. Cameron*	4,892	5,097	4,986	—	Lib.
Northants	Wellingborough	*T. F. Richards*	1,431	7,430	6,676	—	Lib.
Kent	Chatham	*Frank Smith*	1,103	6,989	4,302	—	Lib.
London	Lambeth, North	*Harry Gosling*	2,202	—	2,531	—	Cons.
Wales	Glamorgan, East	*C. B. Stanton*	4,675	9,088	5,603	—	Lib.
,,	,, Mid-	*Vernon Hartshorn*	6,102	7,624	—	—	Lib.
,,	Carmarthen, East	*J. H. Williams*	1,176	5,825	2,315	—	Lib.
Scotland	Glasgow, Camlachie	*J. O'Connor Kessack*	1,539	3,453	3,479	35 (Suffrage)	Cons.
,,	Lanarkshire, Mid-	*Robert Smillie*	3,847	6,033	5,702	—	Lib.
,,	,, N.E.	*John Robertson*	2,879	7,976	6,776	—	Lib.

In addition four Socialist candidates went to the poll :

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Lancashire	Burnley	*H. M. Hyndman*	3,810	6,177	6,004	—	Lib.
,,	Rochdale	*Dan Irving*	1,903	5,850	5,373	—	Lib.
London	Battersea	*C. N. L. Shaw*	487	7,836 (Lib.-Lab.)	6,544	—	Lib.-Lab.
,,	Kennington	*Victor Grayson*	408	3,565	3,510	—	Lib.

The following 'Lib.-Labs.', in addition to Vivian, were defeated :

Area.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
Yorkshire	Sheffield, Central	*A. J. Bailey*	3,271	—	3,455	—	Cons.
Durham	Darlington	*Fred Maddison*	4,475	—	4,881	—	Cons.
Nottinghamshire	Nottingham, South	*Arthur Richardson*	5,766	—	6,151	—	Cons.
Warwickshire	Birmingham, East	*J. V. Stevens*	3,190	—	6,639	—	Cons.

During 1911 the Labour Party fought four by-elections, as follows :

Date.		Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
1911.	March	Lanarkshire, North-East	*John Robertson*	2,879	7,976	6,776	—	Lib.
	Sept.	Kilmarnock Burghs	*Thomas McKerrell*	2,761	6,923	4,637	—	Lib.
	Oct.	Keighley	*W. C. Anderson*	3,452	4,667	3,842	—	Lib.
	Nov.	Oldham	*W. C. Robinson*	7,448	10,623	12,255	—	Cons.

There was also one independent Socialist candidate :

1911.	July	Bethnal Green, South-West	*John Scurr*	134	2,745	2,561	—	Lib.

During 1912 the Labour Party fought four by-elections, as follows :

1912.	June	Yorks, Holmfirth	*William Lunn*	3,195	4,749	3,379	—	Lib.
	July	Crewe	*J. H. Holmes*	2,485	5,294	6,260	—	Cons.
	July	Hanley [1]	*Samuel Finney*	1,694	6,647	5,993	—	Lib.
	Sept.	Midlothian	*Robert Brown*	2,413	5,989	6,021	—	Cons.

[1] This seat had been held by Enoch Edwards, of the Miners' Federation, who was elected as a Labour Party nominee.

The following independent Labour candidates also contested seats in 1912 :

1912.	Jan.	Carmarthen Boroughs	*F. G. Vivian*	149	3,846	2,555	—	Lib.
	Aug.	Carmarthenshire, East	*Dr. J. H. Williams,* (I.L.P.)	1,089	6,071	3,342	—	Lib.

In addition George Lansbury resigned his seat, in order to fight on the issue of Women's Suffrage. He was not supported by the Labour Party, and was beaten.

1912.	Nov.	Bow and Bromley	*George Lansbury*	3,291	—	4,042	—	Cons.

During 1913 the Labour Party officially contested three by-elections, as follows :

1913.	March	Durham, Houghton-le-Spring	*William House*	4,165	6,930	4,807	—	Lib.
	Nov.	Keighley	*William Bland*	3,646	4,730	3,852	—	Lib.
	Dec.	Lanarkshire, South	*T. Gibb*	1,674	4,006	4,257	—	Cons.

Socialist candidates were put forward in three other contests :

1913.	June	Leicester	*E. R. Hartley*	2,580	10,863	9,270	—	Lib.
	Aug.	Derbyshire, Chesterfield [1]	*John Scurr*	583	7,725 (Lib.-Lab.)	5,539	—	Lib.-Lab.
	Nov.	Reading	*J. G. Butler*	1,063	4,013	5,144	—	Cons.

[1] The Chesterfield seat had been held by James Haslam, of the Miners' Federation, and counted as a Labour Party seat. The Derbyshire Miners' Association, however, nominated *Barnet Kenyon*, one of their officials, to succeed Haslam ; and Kenyon insisted on standing with official Liberal support. He was not endorsed by the Labour Party, which did not however fight the seat. Scurr then intervened as a Socialist, but Kenyon was elected as a 'Lib.-Lab.'

In addition, during 1913, there was the following 'Lib.-Lab.' contest :

1913.	June	London, Wandsworth	*James Havelock Wilson*	7,088	—	13,425	—	Cons.

During 1914, up to the outbreak of war, the Labour Party fought three by-elections, as follows :

	Date.	Constituency.	Candidate.	Vote.	Liberal Vote.	Conservative Vote.	Other Votes.	Victor.
1914.	Jan.	Durham, North-West	*G. H. Stuart*	5,026	7,241	5,564	—	Lib.
	Feb.	Leith	*J. N. Bell*	3,346	5,143	5,159	—	Cons.
	May	Derbyshire, North-East [1]	*J. Martin*	3,669	6,155	6,469	—	Cons.

[1] North-East Derbyshire was another miners' seat, held by *W. E. Harvey*, and counted as a Labour seat in the election of 1910. On Harvey's death, the Liberals put up a candidate against the nominee of the Derbyshire Miners' Association, and a Conservative won the seat.

In addition, there was one independent Socialist candidate in 1914 :

1914.	May	Ipswich	*John Scurr*	395	5,874	6,406	—	Cons.

This was Scurr's second fight against the Liberal Minister, C. F. G. Masterman, who had been elected in spite of his intervention in South-West Bethnal Green in 1911. On this occasion Scurr's intervention may have helped to bring about Masterman's defeat.

Between 1911 and August, 1914, the Labour Party lost four seats as a result of by-elections. These were Hanley (Enoch Edwards), 1912; Bow and Bromley (George Lansbury), 1912; Chesterfield (James Haslam), 1913; Derbyshire, North-East (W. E. Harvey), 1914. In addition J. G. Hancock (Mid-Derbyshire) had in effect ceased to belong to the party. As there had been no gains, this reduced the party strength from 42 to 37.

Meanwhile, the 'Lib.-Labs.' had been reinforced by Barnet Kenyon (Chesterfield), in addition to J. G. Hancock, leaving a 'Lib.-Lab.' strength of five miners and three others, including John Burns.

APPENDIX II

LABOUR PARTY STATISTICS

LABOUR REPRESENTATION BY REGIONS, 1900–18

(L.R.C. AND LABOUR PARTY SEATS ONLY)

	1900	1905	1906	1906 Including Miners who afterwards joined the Party.	1910 Jan.	1910 Dec.	1918
London . . .	–	1	3	3	2	4	3
Lancs. and Cheshire .	–	1	13	13	13	10	14
Yorkshire . . .	–	–	3	5	6	6	6
North-East . . .	–	1	4	5	3	4	5
North-West . . .	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
Midlands . . .	1	–	2	5	8	8	11
Eastern Counties . .	–	–	1	1	1	1	1
South-East . . .	–	–	1	1	–	–	–
South and West . .	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
Wales and Monmouth .	1	1	1	5	5	5	9
Scotland . . .	–	–	2	2	2	3	6
Ireland . . .	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Totals . . .	2	4	30	40	40	42	57

THE LABOUR CONTESTS OF 1906

	Successful Labour Party Candidates.				Unsuccessful Labour Party Candidates.			Other Unsuccessful Socialist Candidates.			Successful Lib.-Lab.
	In 3-cornered contests.	Against Cons. only.	Against Lib. only.	Total.	In 3-cornered contests.	Against Cons. only.	Against Lib. only.	In 3-cornered contests.	Against Cons. only.	Against Lib. only.	
London	1	2	–	3	2	–	–	1	–	–	3
Lancs. and Cheshire	–	13	–	13	1	2	–	4	–	–	2
Yorkshire	1	2	–	3	4	1	–	3	–	–	3
North-East	1	3	–	4	1	1	1	–	–	–	4
North-West	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Midlands	–	2	–	2	1	2	–	2	–	–	8
Rest of England	–	2	–	2	1	–	–	2	–	–	1
Wales and Monmouth	–	–	1	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	4
Scotland	2	–	–	2	7	–	–	1	–	–	–
Ireland	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–
Totals	5	24	1	30 [1]	18	7	1	13	–	–	25 [2]

[1] Including 4 Miners.

[2] Including 13 Miners.

THE LABOUR CONTESTS OF JANUARY, 1910

	Labour Party Candidates. Successful Candidates.				Labour Party Candidates. Unsuccessful Candidates.			Other Socialist Unsuccessful Candidates.			Successful Lib.-Lab. Candidates.
	In 3-cornered contests.	Against Cons. only.	Against Lib. only.	Total.	In 3-cornered contests.	Against Cons. only.	Against Lib. only.	In 3-cornered contests.	Against Cons. only.	Against Lib. only.	
London . .	–	2	–	2	1	1	–	1	–	–	1
Lancs. and Cheshire .	–	13	–	13	7	2	–	3	–	–	1
Yorkshire . .	–	6	–	6	6	2	–	2	–	–	–
North-East .	–	3	–	3	3	1	–	–	–	–	3
North-West .	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	1	–	–	–
Midlands . .	–	8	–	8	–	3	–	2	–	–	1
Eastern Counties	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
South-East .	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–
Rest of England .	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–	–	–
Wales and Monmouth .	–	4	1	5	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Scotland . .	–	2	–	2	9	–	–	1	–	–	–
Ireland . .	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–
Totals .	–	39 [1]	1	40 [2]	32	11	–	10	–	–	6

[1] Including eight in double constituencies.

[2] Including 17 Miners.

THE LABOUR CONTESTS OF DECEMBER, 1910

	Unopposed.	Successful Candidates.				Unsuccessful Candidates.			Other Socialist Unsuccessful Candidates.			Successful Lib.-Lab. Candidates.
		In 3-cornered contests.	Against Cons. only.	Against Lib. only.	Total.	In 3-cornered contests.	Against Cons. only.	Against Lib. only.	In 3-cornered contests.	Against Cons. only.	Against Lib. only.	
London . .	–	–	4	–	4	–	1	–	2	–	–	1
Lancs. and Cheshire .	–	–	10	–	10	–	5	–	2	–	–	–
Yorkshire . .	1	–	5	–	6	2	1	–	–	–	–	–
North-East .	1	–	3	–	4	2	–	–	–	–	–	3
North-West .	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Midlands . .	–	–	8	–	8	1	–	–	–	–	–	1
Eastern Counties	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
South-East .	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1
Rest of England	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Wales and Monmouth .	1	–	4	–	5	2	1	–	–	–	–	–
Scotland . .	–	–	2	1	3	4	–	–	–	–	–	–
Ireland . .	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Totals .	3	–	38[1]	1	42[2]	11	9	–	4	–	–	6

[1] Including 11 in double constituencies.

[2] Including 17 Miners.

AFFILIATED MEMBERSHIP OF THE LABOUR PARTY, 1900–18

The following table indicates the fluctuations in the Party membership since its formation in 1900 :

	Trade Unions.		Trades Councils and Local Labour Parties	Socialist Societies.		
	No.	Membership.	No.	No.	Membership.	Total.*
1900–01	41	353,070	7	3	22,861	375,931
1901–02	65	455,450	21	2	13,861	469,311
1902–03	127	847,315	49	2	13,835	861,150
1903–04	165	956,025	76	2	13,775	969,800
1904–05	158	855,270	73	2	14,730	870,000
1905–06	158	904,496	73	2	16,784	921,280
1906–07	176	975,182	83	2	20,885	998,338
1907	181	1,049,673	92	2	22,267	1,072,413
1908	176	1,127,035	133	2	27,465	1,158,565
1909	172	1,450,648	155	2	30,982	1,486,308
1910	151	1,394,402	148	2	31,377	1,430,539
1911	141	1,501,783	149	2	31,404	1,539,092
1912	130	1,858,178	146	2	31,237	1,895,498
1913	—	—	158	2	33,304	—
1914	101	1,572,391	179	2	33,230	1,612,147
1915	111	2,053,735	177	2	32,838	2,093,365
1916	119	2,170,782	199	3	42,190	2,219,764
1917	123	2,415,383	239	3	47,140	2,465,131
1918–19	131	2,960,409	389	4	52,720	3,013,129

* Including Miscellaneous.

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In addition to the above and many books not listed, I have made much use, for the middle of the nineteenth century (roughly 1860–80) of the Howell Papers, now in the Bishopsgate Institute in London. For later periods I have used the Annual Reports of the Independent Labour Party (from 1893), and of the Labour Representation Committee and the Labour Party (from 1900), as well as the reports of the Fabian Society, Social Democratic Federation, etc. Among periodicals, *The Clarion* and *The Labour Leader* are both very useful from the early 'nineties, and *Reynolds's Newspaper*, both for the 'sixties and 'seventies and for later periods. There are many memoirs of Labour leaders in addition to those listed ; and pamphlets are too numerous to mention.

INDEX OF PERSONS*

* References to persons mentioned in the Appendices are not indexed, except where there is some information about them apart from the election figures.

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